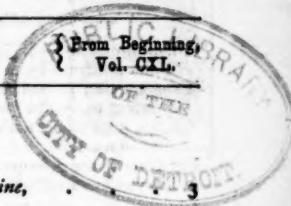


LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

Fifth Series,
Volume XXV.

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From Beginning,
Vol. CXL.



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Single Numbers of *THE LIVING AGE*, 18 cents.

IRISH AIR, ETC.

IRISH AIR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SONGS OF KILLARNEY."

"Twas pretty to be in Ballinderry."

"Twas pretty to be in Ballinderry,
 'Twas pretty to be in Aghalee,
 'Twas prettier to be in little Ram's Island,
 Trysting under the ivy tree !

Och hone, ochone !

Och hone, ochone !

For often I roved in little Ram's Island
 Side by side with Phelimy Hyland,
 And still he'd court me, and I'd be coy,
 Though at heart I loved him, my handsome
 boy !

"I'm sailing," he sighed, "from Ballinderry
 Out and across the stormy sea,
 Then if in your heart you love me, Mary,
 Open your arms at last to me."

Och hone, ochone !

Och hone, ochone !

I opened my arms — how well he knew me !
 I opened my arms and took him to me,
 And there, in the gloom of the groaning
 mast,

We kissed our first and we kissed our last !

"Twas happy to be in little Ram's Island :
 But now 'tis sad as sad can be ;
 For the ship that sailed with Phelimy Hyland
 Is sunk forever beneath the sea.

Och hone, ochone !

Och hone, ochone !

And 'tis oh ! but I wear the weeping willow,
 And wander alone by the lonesome billow,
 And cry to him over the cruel sea,
 "Phelimy Hyland, come back to me !"

Good Words.

LOVE'S PROMISE.

"I WILL come back," Love cried, "I will come
 back."
 And there where he had passed lay one bright
 track

Dreamlike and golden, as the moonlit sea,
 Between the pine wood's shadow tall and
 black.

"I will come back," Love cried — ah me !
 Love will come back.

He will come back. Yet, Love, I wait, I
 wait;
 Though it is evening now, and cold and late,
 And I am weary watching here so long,
 A pale, sad watcher at a silent gate,
 For Love who is so fair and swift and
 strong.

I wait, I wait.

He will come back — come back, though he
 delays ;

He will come back — for in old years and days

He was my playmate — he will not forget,
 Though he may linger long amid new ways,He will bring back, with barren sweet re-
 gret,

Old years and days.

Hush ! on the lonely hills Love comes again ;
 But his young feet are marked with many a
 stain,The golden haze has passed from his fair
 brow,And round him clings the blood-red robe of
 pain :
And it is night : O Love — Love — enter
 now.

Remain, remain !

U.

Macmillan's Magazine.

HILL-VOICES.

THE curlew wheeling o'er the height
 Hath touched a softer note to-night ;
 I hear it calling in its flight,

Helen, Helen !

The sad-toned burn from yon hillside
 Sends my fond secret floating wide,
 And whispers to the white-lipped tide,

Helen, Helen !

The sheep are bleating on the fell,
 The night-wind chimes the heather-bell,
 All music moves to one sweet spell,

Helen, Helen !

That spell hath sway within my breast,
 And moves me to its one behest ;
 Oh, gird me for some goodly quest,

Helen, Helen !

For brooding thought makes young hearts
 sore ;
 And I have lingered by the shore,
 All weary for the passing o'er,

Helen, Helen !

But life to me is not so lone,
 And death to me hath darker grown,
 Since on my path thy presence shone,

Helen, Helen !

So 'mong the hills I dream my dream,
 Under the starlight's wandering gleam,
 And all around the voices seem,

Helen, Helen !

The curlew now is nestled still ;
 The sheep are silent on the hill ;
 But aye the burn goes singing shrill,

Helen, Helen !

JAMES HENDRY.

From The Cornhill Magazine.

LANDOR'S "IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS."

WHEN Mr. Forster brought out the collected edition of Landor's works, the critics were generally embarrassed. They evaded for the most part any committal of themselves to an estimate of their author's merits, and were generally content to say that we might now look forward to a definitive judgment in the ultimate court of literary appeal. Such an attitude of suspense was natural enough. Landor is perhaps the most striking instance in modern literature of a radical divergence of opinion between the connoisseurs and the mass of readers. The general public have never been induced to read him, in spite of the lavish applauses of some self-constituted authorities. One may go further. It is doubtful whether those who aspire to a finer literary palate than is possessed by the vulgar herd are really so keenly appreciative as the innocent reader of published remarks might suppose. Hypocrisy in matters of taste — whether of the literal or metaphorical kind — is the commonest of vices. There are vintages, both material and intellectual, which are more frequently praised than heartily enjoyed. I have heard very good judges whisper in private that they have found Landor dull; and the rare citations made from his works often betray a very perfunctory study of them. Not long ago, for example, an able critic quoted a passage from one of the "Imaginary Conversations," to prove that Landor admired Milton's prose, adding the remark that it might probably be taken as an expression of his real sentiments, although put in the mouth of a dramatic person. To any one who has read Landor with ordinary attention, it seems as absurd to speak in this hypothetical manner as it would be to infer from some incidental allusion that Mr. Ruskin admires Turner. Landor's adoration for Milton is one of the most conspicuous of his critical propensities. There are, of course, many eulogies upon Landor of undeniable weight. They are hearty, genuine, and from competent judges. Yet the enthusiasm of such admirable critics as Mr. Emerson and Mr. Lowell may be

carped at by some who fancy that every American enjoys a peculiar sense of complacency when rescuing an English genius from the neglect of his own countrymen. If Mr. Browning and Mr. Swinburne have been conspicuous in their admiration, it might be urged that neither of them has too strong desire to keep to that beaten high road of the commonplace, beyond which even the best guides meet with pitfalls. Southey's praises of Landor were sincere and emphatic; but it must be added that they provoke a recollection of one of Johnson's shrewd remarks. "The reciprocal civility of authors," says the doctor, "is one of the most risible scenes in the farce of life." One forgives poor Southey indeed for the vanity which enabled him to bear up so bravely against anxiety and repeated disappointment; and if both he and Landor found that "reciprocal civility" helped them to bear the disregard of contemporaries, one would not judge them harshly. It was simply a tacit agreement to throw their harmless vanity into a common stock. Of Mr. Forster, Landor's faithful friend and admirer, one can only say that in his writing about Landor, as upon other topics, we are distracted between the respect due to his strong feeling for the excellent in literature, and the undeniable fact that his criticisms have a very blunt edge, and that his eulogies are apt to be indiscriminate.

Southey and Wordsworth had a simple method of explaining the neglect of a great author. According to them contemporary neglect affords a negative presumption in favor of permanent reputation. No lofty poet has honor in his own generation. Southey's conviction that his ponderous epics would make the fortune of his children is a pleasant instance of self-delusion. But the theory is generally admitted in regard to Wordsworth; and Landor accepted and defended it with characteristic vigor. "I have published," he says in the conversation with Hare, "five volumes of 'Imaginary Conversations': cut the worst of them through the middle, and there will remain in the decimal fraction enough to satisfy my appetite for fame. I shall dine late; but the dining-room will be well lighted, the guests few and select." He

recurs frequently to the doctrine. "Be patient!" he says, in another character. "From the higher heavens of poetry, it is long before the radiance of the brightest star can reach the world below. We hear that one man finds out one beauty, another man finds out another, placing his observatory and instruments on the poet's grave. The worms must have eaten us before we rightly know what we are. It is only when we are skeletons that we are boxed and ticketed and prized and shown. Be it so! I shall not be tired of waiting." Conscious, as he says in his own person, that in two thousand years there have not been five volumes of prose (the work of one author) equal to his "Conversations," he could indeed afford to wait: if conscious of earthly things, he must be waiting still.

This superlative self-esteem strikes one, to say the truth, as part of Landor's abiding boyishness. It is only in schoolboy themes that we are still inclined to talk about the devouring love of fame. Grown-up men look rightly with some contempt upon such aspirations. What work a man does is really done in, or at least through, his own generation; and the posthumous fame which poets affect to value means, for the most part, being known by name to a few antiquarians, schoolmasters, or secluded students. When the poet, to adopt Landor's metaphor, has become a luminous star, his superiority to those which have grown dim by distance is for the first time clearly demonstrated. We can still see him, though other bodies of his system have vanished into the infinite depths of oblivion. But he has also ceased to give appreciable warmth or light to ordinary human beings. He is a splendid name, but not a living influence. There are, of course, exceptions and qualifications to any such statements, but I have a suspicion that even Shakespeare's chief work may have been done in the Globe Theatre, to living audiences, who felt what they never thought of criticising, and were quite unable to measure; and that spite of all aesthetic philosophers and minute antiquarians and judicious revivals, his real influence upon men's minds has been for the most part declining as his fame has been spreading. To defend or fully ex-

pound this heretical dogma would take too much space. The "late-dinner" theory, however, as held by Wordsworth and Landor, is subject to one less questionable qualification. It is an utterly untenable proposition that great men have been generally overlooked in their own day.

If we run over the chief names of our literature, it would be hard to point to one which was not honored, and sometimes honored to excess, during its proprietor's lifetime. It is, indeed, true that much ephemeral underwood has often hidden in part the majestic forms which now stand out as sole relics of the forest. It is true also that the petty spite and jealousy of contemporaries, especially of their ablest contemporaries, has often prevented the full recognition of great men. And there have been some whose fame, like that of Bunyan and Defoe, has extended amongst the lower sphere of readers before receiving the ratification of constituted judges. But such irregularities in the distribution of fame do not quite meet the point. I doubt whether one could mention a single case in which an author, overlooked at the time, both by the critics and the mass, has afterwards become famous; and the cases are very rare in which a reputation once decayed has again taken root and shown real vitality. The experiment of resuscitation has been tried of late years with great pertinacity. The forgotten images of our seventeenth-century ancestors have been brought out of the lumber-room amidst immense flourishes of trumpets, but they are terribly worm-eaten; and all efforts to make their statues once more stand firmly on their pedestals have generally failed. Landor himself refused to see the merits of the mere "mushrooms," as he somewhere called them, which grew beneath the Shakespearian oak; and though such men as Chapman, Webster, and Ford have received the warmest eulogies of Lamb and other able successors, their vitality is spasmodic and uncertain. We read them, if we read them, at the point of the critic's bayonet.

The case of Wordsworth is no precedent for Landor. Wordsworth's fame was for a long time confined to a narrow sect, and he did all in his power to hinder its spread.

by wilful disregard of the established canons — even when founded in reason. A reformer who will not court the prejudices even of his friends is likely to be slow in making converts. But it is one thing to be slow in getting a hearing, and another in attracting men who are quite prepared to hear. Wordsworth resembled a man coming into a drawing-room with muddy boots and a smock-frock. He courted disgust, and such courtship is pretty sure of success. But Landor made his bow in full court dress. In spite of the difficulty of his poetry, he had all the natural graces which are apt to propitiate cultivated readers. His prose has merits so conspicuous and so dear to the critical mind, that one might have expected his welcome from the connoisseurs to be warm even beyond the limit of sincerity. To praise him was to announce one's own possession of a fine classical taste, and there can be no greater stimulus to critical enthusiasm. One might have guessed that he would be a favorite with all who set up for a discernment superior to that of the vulgar; though the causes which must obstruct a wide recognition of his merits are sufficiently obvious. It may be interesting to consider the cause of his ill success with some fulness; and it is a comfort to the critic to reflect that in such a case even obtuseness is in some sort a qualification; for it will enable one to sympathize with the vulgar insensibility to the offered delicacy, if only to substitute articulate rejection for simple, stolid silence.

I do not wish, indeed, to put forward such a claim too unreservedly. I will merely take courage to confess that Landor very frequently bores me. So do a good many writers whom I thoroughly admire. If any courage be wanted for such a confession, it is certainly not when writing upon Landor that one should be reticent for want of example. Nobody ever spoke his mind more freely about great expectations. He is, for example, almost the only poet who ever admitted that he could not read Spenser continuously. Even Milton in Landor's hands, in defiance of his known opinions, was made to speak contemptuously of "The Faerie

Queene." "There is scarcely a poet of the same eminence," says Porson, obviously representing Landor in this case, "whom I have found it so delightful to read in, and so hard to read through." What Landor here says of Spenser, I should venture to say of Landor. There are few books of the kind into which one may dip with so great a certainty of finding much to admire as the "Imaginary Conversations," and few of any high reputation which are so certain to become wearisome after a time. My apology, if apology be needed, shall be given presently. But I must also admit, that on thinking of the whole five volumes, so emphatically extolled by their author, I feel certain twinges of remorse. There is a vigor of feeling, an originality of character, a fineness of style which makes one understand, if not quite agree to, the audacious self-commendation. Part of the effect is due simply to the sheer quantity of good writing. Take any essay separately, and one must admit that — to speak only of his contemporaries — there is a greater charm in passages of equal length by Lamb, De Quincey, or even Hazlitt. None of them gets upon such stilts, or seems so anxious to keep the reader at arm's length. But, on the other hand, there is something imposing in so continuous a flow of stately and generally faultless English, with so many weighty aphorisms rising spontaneously, and without a splashing or disturbance, to the surface of talk, and such an easy felicity of theme unmarred by the flash and glitter of the modern epigrammatic style.* Lamb is both sweeter and more profound, to say nothing of his incomparable humor; but then Lamb's flight is short and uncertain. De Quincey's passages of splendid rhetoric are too often succeeded by dead levels of verbosity and labored puerilities which make annoyance alternate with enthusiasm. Hazlitt is often spasmodic, and his intrusive egotism is pettish and undignified. But so far at least as his style is concerned, Landor's unruffled stream of continuous harmony excites one's admiration.

* Let me remark in passing that Landor should apparently have credit for one epigram which has been adopted by more popular authors: "Those who have failed as writers turn reviewers," says Porson to Southey.

tion the more the longer one reads. Hardly any one who has written so much has kept so uniformly to a high level, and so seldom descended to empty verbosity or to downright slipshod. It is true that the substance does not always correspond to the perfection of the form. There are frequent discontinuities of thought where the style is smoothest. He reminds one at times of those Alpine glaciers where an exquisitely rounded surface of snow conceals yawning crevasses beneath; and if one stops for a moment to think, one is apt to break through the crust with an abrupt and annoying jerk.

The excellence of Landor's style has, of course, been universally acknowledged, and it is natural that it should be more appreciated by his fellow craftsmen than by general readers less interested in technical questions. The defects are the natural complements of its merits. When accused of being too figurative, he had a ready reply. "Wordsworth," he says in one of his "Conversations," "slithers on the soft mud, and cannot stop himself until he comes down. In his poetry there is as much of prose as there is of poetry in the prose of Milton. But prose on certain occasions can bear a great deal of poetry; on the other hand, poetry sinks and swoons under a moderate weight of prose, and neither fan nor burnt feather can bring her to herself again." The remark about the relations of prose and poetry was originally made in a real conversation with Wordsworth in defence of Landor's own luxuriance. Wordsworth, it is said, took it to himself, and not without reason, as appears by its insertion in this "Conversation." The retort, however happy, is no more conclusive than other cases of the *tu quoque*. We are too often inclined to say to Landor as Southey says to Porson in another place: "Pray leave these tropes and metaphors." His sense suffers from a superfetation of figures, or from the undue pursuit of a figure, till the "wind of the poor phrase is cracked." In the phrase just quoted, for example, we could dispense with the "fan and burnt feather," which have very little relation to the thought. So, to take an instance of the excessively florid, I may quote the phrase in which Marvell defends his want of respect for the aristocracy of his day. "Ever too hard upon great men, Mr. Marvell!" says Bishop Parker; and Marvell replies: —

Little men in lofty places, who throw long shadows because our sun is setting; the men so little and the places so lofty that casting my pebble, I only show where they stand.

They would be less contented with themselves, if they had obtained their preferment honestly. Luck and dexterity always give more pleasure than intellect and knowledge; because they fill up what they fall on to the brim at once; and people run to them with acclamations at the splash. Wisdom is reserved and noiseless, contented with hard earnings, and daily letting go some early acquisition to make room for better specimens. But great is the exultation of a worthless man when he receives for the chips and raspings of his Bridewell logwood a richer reward than the best and wisest for extensive tracts of well-cleared truths! Even he who has sold his country —

"Forbear, good Mr. Marvell," says Bishop Parker, and one is inclined to sympathize with the poor man drowned under this cascade of tropes. It is certainly imposing, but I should be glad to know the meaning of the metaphor about "luck and dexterity." Passages occur, again, in which we are tempted to think that Landor is falling into an imitation of an obsolete model. Take, for example, the following:

A narrow mind cannot be enlarged, nor can a capacious one be contracted. Are we angry with a phial for not being a flask? or do we wonder that the skin of an elephant sits uneasily on a squirrel?

Or this, in reference to Wordsworth: —

Pastiness and flatness are the qualities of a pancake, and thus far he attained his aim: but if he means it for me, let him place the accessories on the table, lest what is insipid and clammy . . . grow into duller accretion and moister viscidity the more I masticate it.

Or a remark given to Newton: —

Wherever there is vacuity of mind, there must either be flaccidity or craving; and this vacuity must necessarily be found in the greater part of princes, from the defects of their education, from the fear of offending them in its progress by interrogations and admonitions, from the habit of rendering all things valueless by the facility with which they are obtained, and transitory by the negligence with which they are received and holden.

Should we not remove the names of Porson and Newton from these sentences, and substitute Sam Johnson? The last passage reads very like a quotation from "The Rambler." Johnson was, in my opinion and in Landor's, a great writer in spite of his mannerism; but the mannerism is always rather awkward, and in such places we seem to see — certainly not a squirrel — but, say, a thoroughbred horse invested with the skin of an elephant.

These lapses into the inflated are of course exceptional with Landor. There can be no question of the fineness of his

perception in all matters of literary form. To say that his standard of style is classical is to repeat a commonplace too obvious for repetition, except to add a doubt whether he is not often too ostentatious and self-conscious in his classicism. He loves and often exhibits a masculine simplicity, and speaks with enthusiasm of Locke and Swift in their own departments. Locke is to be "revered;" he is "too simply grand for admiration;" and no one, he thinks, ever had such a power as Swift of saying forcibly and completely whatever he meant to say. But for his own purposes he generally prefers a different model. The qualities which he specially claims seem to be summed up in the conversation upon Bacon's "Essays" between Newton and Barrow. Cicero and Bacon, says Barrow, have more wisdom between them than all the philosophers of antiquity. Newton's review of the "Essays," he adds, "hath brought back to my recollection so much of shrewd judgment, so much of rich imagery, such a profusion of truths so plain as (without his manner of exhibiting them) to appear almost unimportant, that in various high qualities of the human mind I must acknowledge not only Cicero, but every prose writer among the Greeks, to stand far below him. Cicero is least valued for his highest merits, his fulness and his perspicuity. Bad judges (and how few are not so!) desire in composition the concise and obscure; not knowing that the one most frequently arises from paucity of materials, and the other from inability to manage and dispose them." Landor aims, like Bacon, at rich imagery, at giving to thoughts which appear plain more value by fineness of expression, and at compressing shrewd judgments into weighty aphorisms. He would equally rival Cicero in fulness and perspicuity; whilst a severe rejection of everything slovenly or superfluous would save him from ever deviating into the merely florid. So far as style can be really separated from thought, we may admit unreservedly that he has succeeded in his aim, and has attained a rare harmony of tone and coloring.

There may, indeed, be some doubt as to his perspicuity. Southey said that Landor was obscure, whilst adding that he could not explain the cause of the obscurity. Causes enough may be suggested. Besides his incoherency, his love of figures which sometimes become half detached from the underlying thought, and an over-anxiety to avoid mere smartness which sometimes leads to real vagueness, he expects too much from his readers, or per-

haps despises them too much. He will not condescend to explanation if you do not catch his drift at half a word. He is so desirous to round off his transitions gracefully, that he obliterates the necessary indications of the main divisions of the subject. When criticising Milton or Dante, he can hardly keep his hand off the finest passages in his desire to pare away superfluities. Treating himself in the same fashion, he leaves none of those little signs which, like the typographical hand prefixed to a notice, are extremely convenient, though strictly superfluous. It is doubtless unpleasant to have the hard framework of logical divisions showing too distinctly in an argument, or to have a too elaborate statement of dates and places and external relations in a romance. But such aids to the memory may be removed too freely. The building may be injured in taking away the scaffolding. Such remarks, however, will not explain Landor's failure to get a real hold upon a large body of readers. Writers of far greater obscurity and much more repellent blemishes of style to set against much lower merits, have gained a far wider popularity. The want of sympathy between so eminent a literary artist and his time must rest upon some deeper divergence of sentiment. Landor's writings present the same kind of problem as his life. We are told, and we can see for ourselves, that he was a man of many very high, and many very amiable qualities. He was full of chivalrous feeling; capable of the most flowing and delicate courtesy; easily stirred to righteous indignation against every kind of tyranny and bigotry; capable, too, of a tenderness pleasantly contrasted with his outbursts of passing wrath; passionately fond of children, and a true lover of dogs. But with all this, he could never live long at peace with anybody. He was the most impracticable of men, and every turning-point in his career was decided by some vehement quarrel. He had to leave school in consequence of a quarrel, trifling in itself, but aggravated by "a fierce defiance of all authority and a refusal to ask forgiveness." He got into a preposterous scrape at Oxford, and forced the authorities to rusticate him. This branched out into a quarrel with his father. When he set up as a country gentleman at Llanthony Abbey, he managed to quarrel with his neighbors and his tenants, until the accumulating consequences to his purse forced him to go to Italy. On the road thither, he began the first of many quarrels with his wife, which ultimately developed into a

chronic quarrel and drove him back to England. From England he was finally dislodged by another quarrel which drove him back to Italy. Intermediate quarrels of minor importance are intercalated between those which provoked decisive crises. The lightheartedness which provoked all these difficulties is not more remarkable than the ease with which he threw them off his mind. Blown hither and thither by his own gusts of passion, he always seems to fall on his feet, and forgets his troubles as a schoolboy forgets yesterday's flogging. On the first transitory separation from his wife, he made himself quite happy by writing Latin verses; and he always seems to have found sufficient consolation in such literary occupation for vexations which would have driven some people out of their mind. He would not, he writes, encounter the rudeness of a certain lawyer to save all his property; but he adds, "I have chastised him in my Latin poetry now in the press." Such a mode of chastisement seems to have been as completely satisfactory to Landor as it doubtless was to the lawyer.

His quarrels do not alienate us, for it is evident that they did not proceed from any malignant passion. If his temper was ungovernable, his passions were not odious, or, in any low sense, selfish. In many, if not all of his quarrels he seems to have had at least a very strong show of right on his side, and to have put himself in the wrong by an excessive insistence upon his own dignity. He was one of those ingenuous people who always contrive to be punctilious in the wrong place. It is amusing to observe how Scott generally bestows upon his heroes so keen a sense of honor that he can hardly save them from running their heads against stone walls; whilst to their followers he gives an abundance of shrewd sense which fully appreciates Falstaff's theory of honor. Scott himself managed to combine the two qualities; but poor Landor seems to have had Hotspur's readiness to quarrel on the tenth part of a hair without the redeeming touch of common sense. In a slightly different social sphere, he must, one would fancy, have been the mark of a dozen bullets before he had grown up to manhood: it is not quite clear even now how he avoided duels, unless because he regarded the practice as a Christian barbarism to which the ancients had never condescended.

His position and surroundings tended to aggravate his incoherencies of statement. Like his own Peterborough, he was a man of aristocratic feeling, with a hearty con-

tempt for aristocrats. The expectation that he would one day join the ranks of the country gentlemen unsettled him as a scholar; and when he became a landed proprietor he despised his fellow "barbarians" with a true scholar's contempt. He was not forced into the ordinary professional groove, and yet did not fully imbibe the prejudices of the class who can afford to be idle, and the natural result is an odd mixture of conflicting prejudices. He is classical in taste and cosmopolitan in life, and yet he always retains a certain John-Bull element. His preference of Shakespeare to Racine is associated with, if not partly prompted by, a mere English antipathy to foreigners. He never becomes Italianized so far as to lose his contempt for men whose ideas of sport rank larks with the orthodox partridge. He abuses Castlereagh and poor George III. to his heart's content, and so far flies in the face of British prejudice; but it is by no means as a sympathizer with foreign innovations. His republicanism is strongly dashed with old-fashioned conservatism, and he is proud of a doubtful descent from old worthies of the true English type. Through all his would-be paganism we feel that at bottom he is after all a true-born and wrong-headed Englishman. He never, like Shelley, pushed his quarrel with the old order to the extreme, but remained in a solitary cave of Adullam. "There can be no great genius," says Penn to Peterborough, "where there is not profound and continued reasoning." The remark is too good for Penn; and yet it would be dangerous in Landor's own mouth; for certainly the defect which most strikes us, both in his life and his writings, is just the inconsistency which leaves most people as the reasoning powers develop. His work was marred by the unreasonableness of a nature so impetuous and so absorbed by any momentary gust of passion that he could never bring his thoughts or his plans to a focus, or conform them to a general scheme. His prejudices master him both in speculation and practice. He cannot fairly rise above them or govern them by reference to general principles, or the permanent interests of his life. In the vulgar phrase, he is always ready to cut off his nose to spite his face. He quarrels with his schoolmaster or his wife. In an instant he is all fire and fury, runs amuck at his best friends, and does irreparable mischief. Some men might try to atone for such offences by remorse. Landor, unluckily for himself, could forget the past as easily as he could ignore the future. He

lives only in the present, and can throw himself into a favorite author or compose Latin verses or an imaginary conversation as though schoolmasters or wives, or duns or critics, had no existence. With such a temperament, reasoning, which implies patient contemplation and painful liberation from prejudice, has no fair chance ; his principles are not the growth of thought, but the translation into dogmas of intense likes and dislikes, which have grown up in his mind he scarcely knows how, and gathered strength by sheer force of repetition instead of deliberate examination.

His writings reflect — and in some ways only too faithfully — these idiosyncrasies. Southey said that his temper was the only explanation of his faults. "Never did man represent himself in his writings so much less generous, less just, less compassionate, less noble in all respects than he really is. I certainly," he adds, "never knew any one of brighter genius or of kinder heart." Southey, no doubt, represented certain attacks of Landor's upon his most cherished opinions ; and, truly, nothing but continuous separation could have preserved the friendship between two men so peremptorily opposed upon so many essential points. Southey's criticism, though sharpened by such latent antagonisms, has really much force. The "Conversations" give much that Landor's friends would have been glad to ignore ; and yet they present such a full-length portrait of the man, that it is better to dwell upon them than upon his poetry, which, moreover, with all its fine qualities, is (in my opinion) of far less intrinsic value. The ordinary reader, however, is repelled from the "Conversations" not only by mere inherent difficulties, but by comments which raise a false expectation. An easy-going critic is apt to assume of any book that it exactly fulfils the ostensible aim of the author. So we are told of "Shakespeare's Examination" (and on the high authority of Charles Lamb), that no one could have written it except Landor or Shakespeare-himself. When Bacon is introduced, we are assured that the aphorisms introduced are worthy of Bacon himself. What Cicero is made to say is exactly what he would have said, "if he could ;" and the dialogue between Walton, Cotton, and Oldways is, of course, as good as a passage from "The Complete Angler." In the same spirit we are told that the dialogues were to be "one-act dramas ;" and we are informed how the great philosophers, statesmen, poets, and artists of all ages did in fact pass across the stage, each

represented to the life, and discoursing in his most admirable style.

All this is easy to say, but unluckily represents what the "Conversations" would have been had they been perfect. To say that they are very far from perfect is only to say that they were the compositions of a man ; but Landor was also a man to whom his best friends would hardly attribute a remarkable immunity from fault. The dialogue, it need hardly be remarked, is one of the most difficult of all forms of composition. One rule, however, would be generally admitted. Landor defends his digressions on the ground that they always occur in real conversations. If we "adhere to one point," he says (in Southey's person), "it is a disquisition, not a conversation." And he adds, with one of his wilful back-handed blows at Plato, that most writers of dialogue plunge into abstruse questions, and "collect a heap of arguments to be blown away by the bloated whiff of some rhetorical charlatan, tricked out in a multiplicity of ribbons for the occasion." Possibly ! but for all that, the perfect dialogue ought not, we should say, to be really incoherent. It should include digressions, but the digressions ought to return upon the main subject. The art consists in preserving real unity in the midst of the superficial deviations rendered easy by this form of conversation. The facility of digression is really a temptation, not a privilege. Anybody can write blank verse of a kind, because it so easily slips into prose ; and that is why good blank verse is so rare. And anybody can write a decent dialogue if you allow him to ramble as much as we all do in actual talk. The finest philosophical dialogues are those in which a complete logical framework underlies the dramatic structure. They are a perfect fusion of logic and imagination. Instead of harsh divisions and cross-divisions of the subject, and a balance of abstract arguments, we have vivid portraits of human beings, each embodying a different line of thought. But the logic is still seen, though the more carefully hidden the more exquisite the skill of the artist. And the purely artistic dialogue which describes passion or the emotions arising from a given situation should in the same way set forth a single idea, and preserve a dramatic unity of conception at least as rigidly as a full-grown play. So far as Landor used his facilities as an excuse for rambling, instead of so skilfully subordinating them to the main purpose as to reproduce new variations on the central theme, he is clearly in error,

LANDOR'S "IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS."

or is at least aiming at a lower kind of excellence. And this, it may be said at once, seems to be the most radical defect in the composition of Landor's "Conversations." They have the fault which his real talk is said to have exemplified. We are told that his temperament "disqualified him for anything like sustained reasoning, and he instinctively backed away from discussion or argument." Many of the written dialogues are a prolonged series of explosions; when one expects a continuous development of a theme, they are monotonous thunder-growls. Landor undoubtedly had a sufficient share of dramatic power to write short dialogues expressing a single situation with most admirable power, delicacy, and firmness of touch. Nor, again, does the criticism just made refer to those longer dialogues which are in reality a mere string of notes upon poems or proposals for reforms in spelling. The slight dramatic form binds together his pencilings from the margins of "Paradise Lost" or Wordsworth's poems very pleasantly, and enables him to give additional effect to vivacious outbursts of praise or censure. But the more elaborate dialogues suffer grievously from this absence of a true unity. There is not that skilful evolution of a central idea without the rigid formality of scientific discussion which we admire in the real masterpieces of the art. We have a conglomerate not an organic growth; a series of observations set forth with never-failing elegance of style, and often with singular keenness of perception; but they do not take us beyond the starting-point. When Robinson Crusoe crossed the Pyrenees, his guide led him by such dexterous windings and gradual ascents that he found himself across the mountains before he knew where he was. With Landor it is just the opposite. After many digressions and ramblings we find ourselves back on the same side of the original question. We are marking time with admirable gracefulness, but somehow we are not advancing. Naturally flesh and blood grow weary when there is no apparent end to a discussion, except that the author must in time be wearied of performing variations upon a single theme.

We are more easily reconciled to some other faults which are rather due to expectations raised by his critics than to positive errors. No one, for example, would care to notice an anachronism, if Landor did not occasionally put in a claim for accuracy. I have no objection whatever to allow Hooker to console Bacon for his

loss of the chancellorship, in calm disregard of the fact that Hooker died some twenty years before Bacon rose to that high office. The fault can be amended by substituting any other name for Hooker's. Nor do I at all wish to find in Landor that kind of archaeological accuracy which is sought by some composers of historical romances. Were it not that critics have asserted the opposite, it would be hardly worth while to say that Landor's style seldom condescends to adapt itself to the mouth of the speaker, and that from Demosthenes to Porson every interlocutor has palpably the true Landorian trick of speech. Here and there, it is true, the effect is rather unpleasant. Pericles and Aspasia are apt to indulge in criticism of English customs, and no weak regard for time and place prevents Eubulides from denouncing Canning to Demosthenes. The classical dress becomes so thin on such occasions, that even the small degree of illusion which one may fairly desire is too rudely interrupted. The actor does not disguise his voice enough for theatrical purposes. It is perhaps a more serious fault that the dialogue constantly lapses into monologue. We might often remove the names of the talkers as useless interruptions. Some conversations might as well be headed, in legal phraseology, Landor *v.* Landor, or at most Landor *v.* Landor and another—the other being some wretched man of straw or Guy Faux effigy dragged in to be belabored with weighty aphorisms and talk obtrusive nonsense. Hence sometimes we resent a little the taking in vain of the name of some old friend. It is rather too hard upon Sam Johnson to be made a mere "passive bucket" into which Horne Tooke may pump his philological notions, with scarcely a feeble sputter or two to represent his smashing retorts.

There is yet another criticism or two to be added. The extreme scrupulosity with which Landor polishes his style and removes superfluities from poetical narrative, smoothing them at times till we can hardly grasp them, might have been applied to some of the wanton digressions in which the dialogues abound. We should have been glad if he had ruthlessly cut out two-thirds of the conversation between Richelieu and others, in which some charming English pastorals are mixed up with a quantity of unmistakable rubbish. But, for the most part, we can console ourselves by a smile. When Landor lowers his head and charges bull-like at the phantom of some king or priest, we are prepared for,

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and amused by, his impetuosity. Malesherbes discourses with great point and vigor upon French literature, and may fairly diverge into a little politics; but it is certainly comic when he suddenly remembers one of Landor's pet grievances, and the unlucky Rousseau has to discuss a question for which few people could be more ludicrously unfit—the details of a plan for reforming the institution of English justices of the peace. The grave dignity with which the subject is introduced gives additional piquancy to the absurdity. An occasional laugh at Landor is the more valuable because, to say the truth, one is not very likely to laugh with him. Nothing is more difficult for an author—as he here observes in reference to Milton—than to decide upon his own merits as a wit or humorist. I am not quite sure that this is true; for I have certainly found authors distinctly fallible in judging of their own merits as poets and philosophers. But it is undeniable that many a man laughs at his own wit who has to laugh alone. I will not take upon myself to say that Landor was without humor; he has certainly a delicate gracefulness which may be classed with the finer kinds of humor; but if anybody (to take one instance) will read the story which Chaucer tells to Boccaccio and Petrarch and pronounce it to be amusing, I can only say that his notions of humor differ materially from mine. Landor often sins as distinctly, if not as heavily.

Blemishes such as these go some way perhaps to account for Landor's unpopularity. But they are such as might be amply redeemed by his vigor, his fulness, and unflagging energy of style. There is no equally voluminous author of great power who does not fall short of his own highest achievements in a large part of his work, and who is not open to the remark that his achievements are not all that we could have wished. It is doubtless best to take what we can get, and not to repine if we do not get something better, the possibility of which is suggested by the actual accomplishment. If Landor had united to his own powers those of Scott or Shakespeare, he would have been improved. Landor, repenting a little for some censures of Milton, says to Southey, "Are we not somewhat like two little beggar-boys who, forgetting that they are in tatters, sit noticing a few stains and rents in their father's raiment?" "But they love him," replies Southey, and we feel the apology to be sufficient.

Can we make it in the case of Landor?

Is he a man whom we can take to our hearts, treating his vagaries and ill-humors as we do the testiness of a valued friend? Or do we feel that he is one whom it is better to have for an acquaintance than for an intimate? The problem seems to have exercised those who knew him best in life. Many, like Southey or Napier, thought him a man of true nobility and tenderness of character, and looked upon his defects as mere superficial blemishes. If some who came closer seem to have had a rather different opinion, we must allow that a man's personal defects are often unimportant in his literary capacity. It has been laid down as a general rule that poets cannot get on with their wives; and yet they are poets in virtue of being lovable at the core. Landor's domestic troubles need not indicate an incapacity for meeting our sympathies any more than the domestic troubles of Shakespeare, Milton, Swift, Burns, Byron, Shelley, or many others. In his poetry a man should show his best self; and defects, important in the daily life which is made up of trifles, may cease to trouble us when admitted to the inmost recesses of his nature.

Landor, undoubtedly, may be loved; but I fancy that he can be loved unreservedly only by a very narrow circle. For when we pass from the form to the substance—from the manner in which his message is delivered to the message itself—we find that the superficial defects rise from very deep roots. Whenever we penetrate to the underlying character we find something harsh and uncongenial mixed with very high qualities. He has pronounced himself upon a wide range of subjects; there is much criticism, some of it of a very rare and admirable order; much theological and political disquisition; and much exposition, in various forms, of the practical philosophy which every man imbibes according to his faculties in his passage through the world. It would be undesirable to discuss seriously his political or religious notions. To say the truth, they are not really worth discussing; they are little more than vehement explosions of unreasoning prejudice. I do not know whether Landor would have approved the famous aspiration about strangling the last of kings with the entrails of the last priest, but some such sentiment seems to sum up all that he really has to say. His doctrine so far coincides with that of Diderot and other revolutionists, though he has no sympathy with their social aspirations. His utterances, however, remind us too much—in substance, though not in

form — of the rhetoric of debating societies. They are as factitious as the old-fashioned appeals to the memory of Brutus. They would doubtless make a sensation at the Union. Diogenes tells us that "all nations, all cities, all communities, should combine in one great hunt, like that of the Scythians at the approach of winter, and follow it" (the kingly power, to wit) "up, unrelentingly to its perdition. The diadem should designate the victim; all who wear it, all who offer it, all who bow to it, should perish." Demosthenes, in less direct language, announces the same plan to Eubulides as the one truth, far more important than any other, and "more conducive to whatever is desirable to the well-educated and free." We laugh, not because the phrase is overstrained, or intended to have a dramatic truth; for Landor puts similar sentiments into the mouths of all his favorite speakers; but simply because we feel it to be a mere form of swearing. The language would have been less elegant, but the meaning just the same, if he had rapped out a good, mouth-filling oath whenever he heard the name of a king. When, in reference to some such utterances, Mr. Carlyle said that "Landor's principle is mere rebellion," he was much nettled, and declared himself to be in favor of authority. He despised American republicanism, and regarded Venice as the pattern state. He sympathized in this, as in much else, with the theorists of Milton's time, and would have been approved by Harrington or Algernon Sidney; but, for all that, Mr. Carlyle seems pretty well to have hit the mark. Such republicanism is in reality nothing more than the political expression of intense pride, or, if you prefer the word, self-respect. It is the sentiment of personal dignity, which could not bear the thought that he, Landor, should have to bow the knee to a fool like George III.; or that Milton should have been regarded as the inferior of such a sneak as Charles I. But the same feeling would have been just as much shocked by the claim of a demagogue to override high-spirited gentlemen. Mobs were every whit as vile as kings. He might have stood for Shakespeare's Coriolanus, if Coriolanus had not an unfortunate want of taste in his language. Landor, indeed, being never much troubled as to consistency, is fond of dilating on the absurdity of any kind of hereditary rank; but he sympathizes, to his last fibre, with the spirit fostered by the existence of an aristocratic caste, and producible, so far as our experience has gone, in no other way. He is generous enough

to hate all oppression in every form, and therefore to hate the oppression exercised by a noble as heartily as oppression exercised by a king. He is a big boy ready to fight any one who bullies his fag; but with no doubts as to the merits of flogging. But then he never chooses to look at the awkward consequences of his opinion. When talking of politics, an aristocracy full of virtue and talent, ruling on generous principles a people sufficiently educated to obey its natural leaders, is the ideal which is vaguely before his mind. To ask how it is to be produced without hereditary rank, or to be prevented from degenerating into a tyrannical oligarchy, or to be reconciled at all with modern principles, is simply to be impertinent. He answers all such questions by putting himself in imagination into the attitude of a Pericles or Demosthenes or Milton, fulminating against tyrants and keeping the mob in its place by the ascendancy of genius. To recommend Venice as a model is simply to say that you have nothing but contempt for all politics. It is as if a lad should be asked whether he preferred to join a cavalry or an infantry regiment, and should reply that he would only serve under Leonidas.

His religious principles are in the same way little more than the assertion that he will not be fettered in mind or body by any priest on earth. The priest is to him what he was to the deists and materialists of the eighteenth century — a juggling impostor who uses superstition as an instrument for creeping into the confidence of women and cowards, and burning brave men; but he has no dreams of the advent of a religion of reason. He ridicules the notion that truth will prevail: it never has and it never will. At bottom he prefers paganism to Christianity because it was tolerant and encouraged art, and allowed philosophers to enjoy as much privilege as they can ever really enjoy — that of living in peace and knowing that their neighbors are harmless fools. After a fashion he likes his own version of Christianity, which is superficially that of many popular preachers: Be tolerant, kindly, and happy, and don't worry your head about dogmas, or become a slave to priests. But then one also feels that humility is generally regarded as an essential part of Christianity, and that in Landor's version it is replaced by something like its antithesis. You should do good too, as you respect yourself and would be respected by men; but the chief good is the philosophic mind, which can wrap itself in its own consciousness of worth, and enjoy the finest pleasures of

life while the world goes to playthings. On most occasions tweens and borous temptations represent "Tea-wilt have mysti dor; trious goods aim do wough, — the tocracy avers the o both enjoy his c whole adopt tolera any l or int La same has o the ju upon the j look brea elevatated a sp the o been cal t sym Land age and scard that than for S nied "A A have

life without superstitious asceticism. Let the vulgar amuse themselves with the playthings of their creed, so long as they do not take to playing with faggots. Stand apart and enjoy your own superiority with good-natured contempt.

One of his longest and, in this sense, most characteristic dialogues, is that between Penn and Peterborough. Peterborough is the ideal aristocrat with a contempt for the actual aristocracy; and Penn represents the religion of common sense. "Teach men to calculate rightly and thou wilt have taught them to live religiously," is Penn's sentiment, and perhaps not too unfaithful to the original. No one could have a more thorough contempt for the mystical element in Quakerism than Landor; but he loves Quakers as sober, industrious, easy-going people, who regard good-humor and comfort as the ultimate aim of religious life, and who manage to do without lawyers or priests. Peterborough, meanwhile, represents his other side—the haughty, energetic, cultivated aristocrat, who, on the ground of their common aversions, can hold out a friendly hand to the quiet Quaker. Landor, of course, is both at once. He is the noble who rather enjoys giving a little scandal at times to his drab-suited companion; but, on the whole, thinks that it would be an excellent world if the common people would adopt this harmless form of religion, which tolerates other opinions and does not give any leverage to kings, insolvent aristocrats, or intriguing bishops.

Landor's critical utterances reveal the same tendencies. Much of the criticism has of course an interest of its own. It is the judgment of a real master of language upon many technical points of style, and the judgment, moreover, of one who can look even upon classical poets as one who breathes the same atmosphere at an equal elevation, and who speaks out like a cultivated gentleman, not as a schoolmaster or a specialist. But putting aside this and the crotchets about spelling, which have been dignified with the name of philological theories, the general direction of his sympathies is eminently characteristic. Landor of course pays the inevitable homage to the great names of Plato, Dante, and Shakespeare, and yet it would be scarcely unfair to say that he hates Plato, that Dante gives him far more annoyance than pleasure, and that he really cares little for Shakespeare. The last might be denied on the ground of isolated expressions. "A rib of Shakespeare," he says, "would have made a Milton: the same portion of

Milton all poets born ever since." But he speaks of Shakespeare in conventional terms, and seldom quotes or alludes to him. When he touches Milton his eyes brighten and his voice takes a tone of reverent enthusiasm. His ear is dissatisfied with everything for days and weeks after the harmony of "Paradise Lost." "Leaving this magnificent temple, I am hardly to be pacified by the fairy-built chambers, the rich cupboards of embossed plate and the omnigenous images of Shakespeare." That is his genuine impression. Some readers may appeal to that "Examination of Shakespeare" which (as we have seen) was held by Lamb to be beyond the powers of any other writer except its hero. I confess that, in my opinion, Lamb could have himself drawn a far more sympathetic portrait of Shakespeare, and that Scott would have brought out the whole scene with incomparably greater vividness. Call it a morning in an English country-house in the sixteenth century, and it will be full of charming passages along with some laborious failures. But when we are forced to think of Slender and Shallow, and Sir Hugh Evans, and the Shakesperian method of portraiture, the personages in Landor's talk seem half asleep and terribly given to twaddle. His view of Dante is less equivocal. In the whole "*Inferno*," Petrarcha (evidently representing Landor) finds nothing admirable but the famous descriptions of Francesca and Ugolino. They are the "greater and lesser oases" in a vast desert. And he would pare one of these fine passages to the quick, whilst the other provokes the remark ("we must whisper it") that Dante is "the great master of the disgusting." He seems really to prefer Boccaccio and Ovid, to say nothing of Homer and Virgil. Plato is denounced still more unsparingly. From Aristotle and Diogenes down to Lord Chatham, assailants are set on to worry him, and tear to pieces his gorgeous robes with just an occasional perfunctory apology. Even Lady Jane Grey is deprived of her favorite. She consents on Ascham's petition to lay aside books, but she excepts Cicero, Epictetus, Plutarch, and Polybius: the "others I do resign;" they are good for the arbor and garden walk, but not for the fireside or pillow. This is surely to wrong the poor soul; but Landor is intolerant in his enthusiasm for his philosophical favorites. Epicurus is the teacher whom he really delights to honor, and Cicero is forced to confess in his last hours that he has nearly come over to the camp of his old adversary.

It is easy to interpret the meaning of these prejudices. Landor hates and despises the romantic and the mystic. He has not the least feeling for the art which owes its powers to suggestions of the infinite, or to symbols forced into grotesqueness by the effort to express that for which no thought can be adequate. He refuses to bother himself with allegory or dreamy speculation, and, unlike Sir T. Browne, hates to lose himself in an "*O Aititudo!*" He cares nothing for Dante's inner thoughts, and sees only a hideous chamber of horrors in the "*Inferno*." Plato is a mere compiler of idle sophistries and contemptible to the common sense and worldly wisdom of Locke and Bacon. In the same spirit he despised Wordsworth's philosophizing as heartily as Jeffrey, and though he tried to be just, could really see nothing in him except the writer of good rustic idylls, and of one good piece of pananism, the "*Laodamia*."^{*} From such a point of view he ranks him below Burns, Scott, and Cowper, and makes poor Southeby consent — Southeby who ranked Wordsworth with Milton!

These tendencies are generally summed up by speaking of Landor's objectivity and Hellenism. I have no particular objection to those words except that they seem rather vague and to leave our problem untouched. A man may be as "objective" as you please in a sense, and as thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Greek art, and yet may manage to fall in with the spirit of our own times. The truth is, I fancy, that a simpler name may be given to Landor's tastes, and that we may find them exemplified nearer home. There is many a good country gentleman who rides well to hounds, and is most heartily "objective" in the sense of hating metaphysics and elaborate allegory and unintelligible art, and preferring a glass of wine and a talk with a charming young lady to mystic communings with the world-spirit; and as for Landor's Hellenism, that surely ought not to be an uncommon phenomenon in the region of English public schools. It is really an odd result that we should be so much puzzled by the very man who seems to realize precisely that ideal of culture upon which our most popular system of education is apparently moulded. Here at last is a man who really takes the habit of writing Latin verses seriously; making it a consolation in trouble as well as an elegant amusement. He hopes to rest his

fame upon it, and even by a marvellous *tour de force* writes a great deal of English poetry which for all the world reads exactly like a first-rate copy of modern Greek iambics. For once we have produced just what the system ought to produce, and yet we cannot make him out.

The reason for our not producing more Landors is indeed pretty simple. Men of poetic genius are exceedingly rare at all times, and it is still rarer to find such a man who remains a schoolboy all his life. Landor is precisely a glorified and sublime edition of the model sixth-form lad, only with an unusually strong infusion of schoolboy perversity. Perverse lads, indeed, generally kick over the traces at an earlier point: refuse to learn anything. Boys who take kindly to the classical are generally good, that is to say, docile. They develop into tutors and professors; or, when the cares of life begin to press, they start their cargo of classical lumber and fill the void with law or politics. Landor's peculiar temperament led him to kick against authority, whilst he yet imbibed the spirit of the teaching fully, and in some respects rather too fully.

The impatient and indomitable temper which made quiet or continuous meditation impossible, and the accidental circumstances of his life, left him in possession of qualities which are in most men subdued or expelled by the hard discipline of life. Brought into impulsive collision with all kinds of authorities, he set up a kind of schoolboy republicanism, and used all his poetic eloquence to give it an air of reality. But he never cared to bring it into harmony with any definite system of thought, or let his outbursts of temper transport him into settled antagonism with accepted principles. His aristocratic feeling lay deeper than his quarrels with aristocrats. He troubled himself just as little about theological as about political theories: he was as utterly impervious as the dullest of squires to the mystic philosophy imported by Coleridge, and found the world quite rich enough in sources of enjoyment without tormenting himself about the unseen and the ugly superstitions which thrive in mental twilight. But he had quarrelled with persons as much as with lawyers, and could not stand the thought of a priest interfering with his affairs or limiting his amusements. And so he set up as a tolerant and hearty disciple of Epicurus. Chivalrous sentiment and an exquisite perception of the beautiful saved him from any gross interpretation of his master's principles; although, to say the

* De Quincey gets into a curious puzzle about Landor's remarks, asking which of Wordsworth's poems is meant; and making oddly erroneous guesses.

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truth, he shows an occasional laxity on some points which savors of the easy-going pagan, or perhaps of the noble of the old school. As he grew up he drank deep of English literature, and sympathized with the grand republican pride of Milton—as sturdy a rebel as himself, and a still nobler because more serious rhetorician. He went to Italy, and as he imbibed Italian literature, sympathized with the joyous spirit of Boccaccio and the eternal boyishness of classical art. Mediævalism and all mystic philosophies remained unintelligible to this true born Englishman. Irritated rather than humbled by his incapacity, he cast them aside, pretty much as a schoolboy might throw a Plato at the head of a pedantic master.

The best and most attractive dialogues are those in which he can give free play to this Epicurean sentiment; forget his political mouthing, and inoculate us for the moment with the spirit of youthful enjoyment. Nothing can be more perfectly charming in its way than Epicurus in his exquisite garden, discoursing, on his pleasant knoll, where, with violets, cyclamens, and convolvulus clustering round, he talks to his lovely girl-disciples upon the true theory of life—temperate enjoyment of all refined pleasures, forgetfulness of all cares, and converse with true chosen spirits far from the noise of the profane and vulgar: of the art, in short, by which a man of fine cultivation may make the most of this life, and learn to take death as a calm and happy subsidence into oblivion. Nor far behind is the dialogue in which Lucullus entertains Cæsar in his delightful villa, and illustrates by example, as well as precept, Landor's favorite doctrine of the vast superiority of the literary to the active life. Politics, as he makes even Demosthenes admit, are the "sad refuge of restless minds, averse from business and from study." And certainly there are moods in which we could ask nothing better than to live in a remote villa, in which wealth and art have done everything in their power to give all the pleasures compatible with perfect refinement and contempt of the grosser tastes. Only it must be admitted that this is not quite a gospel for the million. And probably the highest triumph is in the "Pentameron," where the whole scene is so vividly colored by so many delicate touch-

es, and such charming little episodes of Italian life, that we seem almost to have seen the fat, wheezy poet hoisting himself on to his pampered steed, to have listened to the village gossip, and followed the little flirtations in which the true poets take so kindly an interest; and are quite ready to pardon certain useless digressions and critical vagaries, and to overlook complacently any little laxity of morals.

These, and many of the shorter and more dramatic dialogues, have a rare charm, and the critic will return to analyze, if he can, their technical qualities. But little explanation can be needed, after reading them, of Landor's want of popularity. If he had applied half as much literary skill to expand commonplace sentiment; if he had talked that kind of gentle twaddle by which some recent essayists edify their readers, he might have succeeded in gaining a wide popularity. Or if he had been really, as some writers seem to fancy, a deep and systematic thinker as well as a most admirable artist, he would have extorted a hearing even while provoking dissent. But his boyish waywardness has disqualified him from reaching the deeper sympathies of either class. We feel that the most superhuman of schoolboys has really a rather shallow view of life. His various outbursts of wrath amuse us at best when they do not bore, even though they take the outward form of philosophy or statesmanship. He has really no answer or vestige of answer for any problems of his, nor indeed of any other time, for he has no basis of serious thought. All he can say is, ultimately, that he feels himself in a very uncongenial atmosphere, from which it is delightful to retire, in imagination, to the society of Epicurus, or the study of a few literary masterpieces. That may be very true, but it can be interesting only to a few men of similar taste; and men of profound insight, whether of the poetic or the philosophic temperament, are apt to be vexed by his hasty dogmatism and irritable rejection of much which deserved his sympathy. His wanton quarrel with the world has been avenged by the world's indifference. We may regret the result, when we see what rare qualities have been cruelly wasted, but we cannot fairly shut our eyes to the fact that the world has a very strong case.

SIR GIBBIE.

BY GEORGE MACDONALD.

AUTHOR OF "MALCOLM," "THE MARQUIS OF LOSSIE,"
ETC.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

REFUGE.

It was a lovely Saturday evening on Glashgar. The few flowers about the small turf cottage scented the air in the hot western sun. The heather was not in bloom yet, and there were no trees; but there were rocks, and stones, and a brawling burn that half surrounded a little field of oats, one of potatoes, and a small spot with a few stocks of cabbage and kail, on the borders of which grew some bushes of double daisies, and primroses, and carnations. These Janet tended as part of her household, while her husband saw to the oats and potatoes. Robert had charge of the few sheep on the mountain which belonged to the farmer at the Mains, and for his trouble had the cottage and the land, most of which he had himself reclaimed. He had also a certain allowance of meal, which was paid in portions, as corn went from the farm to the mill. If they happened to fall short, the miller would always advance them as much as they needed, repaying himself—and not very strictly—the next time corn was sent from the Mains. They were never in any want, and never had any money, except what their children brought them out of their small wages. But that was plenty for their every need, nor had they the faintest feeling that they were persons to be pitied. It was very cold up there in winter, to be sure, and they both suffered from rheumatism; but they had no debt, no fear, much love, and between them, this being mostly Janet's, a large hope for what lay on the other side of death: as to the rheumatism, that was necessary, Janet said, to teach them patience, for they had no other trouble. They were indeed growing old, but neither had begun to feel age a burden yet, and when it should prove such, they had a daughter prepared to give up service and go home to help them. Their thoughts about themselves were nearly lost in their thoughts about each other, their children, and their friends. Janet's main care was her old man, and Robert turned to Janet as the one stay of his life, next to the God in whom he trusted. He did not think so much about God as she: he was not able; nor did he read so much

of his Bible; but she often read to him; and when any of his children were there of an evening, he always "took the book." While Janet prayed at home, his closet was the mountain-side, where he would kneel in the heather, and pray to him who was unseen, the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. The sheep took no heed of him, but sometimes when he rose from his knees and saw Oscar gazing at him with deepest regard, he would feel a little as if he had not quite entered enough into his closet, and would wonder what the dog was thinking. All day, from the mountain and sky and preaching burns, from the sheep and his dog, from winter storms, spring sun and winds, or summer warmth and glow, but more than all, when he went home, from the presence and influence of his wife, came to him somehow—who can explain how!—spiritual nourishment and vital growth. One great thing in it was, that he kept growing wiser and better without knowing it. If St. Paul had to give up judging his own self, perhaps Robert Grant might get through without ever beginning it. He loved life, but if he had been asked why, he might not have found a ready answer. He loved his wife—just because she was Janet. Blithely he left his cottage in the morning, deep breathing the mountain air as if it were his first in the blissful world; and all day the essential bliss of being was his; but the immediate hope of his heart was not the heavenly city; it was his home and his old woman, and her talk of what she had found in her Bible that day. Strangely mingled—mingled even to confusion with his faith in God, was his absolute trust in his wife—a confidence not very different in kind from the faith which so many Christians place in the mother of our Lord. To Robert, Janet was one who knew—one who was far *b'en* with the Father of lights. She perceived his intentions, understood his words, did his will, dwelt in the secret place of the Most High. When Janet entered into the kingdom of her Father, she would see that he was not left outside. He was as sure of her love to himself, as he was of God's love to her, and was certain she could never be content without her old man. He was himself a dull soul, he thought, and could not expect the great God to take much notice of him, but he would allow Janet to look after him. He had a vague conviction that he would not be very hard to save, for he knew himself ready to do whatever was required of him. None of all this was plain to his consciousness, however, or I

daresay he would have begun at once to combat the feeling.

His sole anxiety, on the other hand, was neither about life nor death, about this world nor the next, but that his children should be honest and honorable, fear God and keep his commandments. Around them, all and each, the thoughts of father and mother were constantly hovering — as if to watch them, and ward off evil.

Almost from the day, now many years ago, when, because of distance and difficulty, she ceased to go to church, Janet had taken to her New Testament in a new fashion.

She possessed an instinctive power of discriminating character, which had its root and growth in the simplicity of her own; she had always been a student of those phases of humanity that came within her ken; she had a large share of that interest in her fellows and their affairs which is the very bloom upon ripe humanity: with these qualifications, and the interpretative light afforded by her own calm practical way of living, she came to understand men and their actions, especially where the latter differed from what might ordinarily have been expected, in a marvellous way: her faculty amounted almost to sympathetic contact with the very humanity. When, therefore, she found herself in this remote spot, where she could see so little of her kind, she began, she hardly knew by what initiation, to turn her study upon the story of our Lord's life. Nor was it long before it possessed her utterly, so that she concentrated upon it all the light and power of vision she had gathered from her experience of humanity. It ought not therefore to be wonderful how much she now understood of the true humanity — with what simple directness she knew what many of the words of the Son of Man meant, and perceived many of the germs of his individual actions. Hence it followed naturally that the thought of him, and the hope of one day seeing him, became her one informing idea. She was now such another as those women who ministered to him on the earth.

A certain gentle indifference she showed to things considered important, the neighbors attributed to weakness of character, and called *softness*; while the honesty, energy, and directness with which she acted upon insights they did not possess, they attributed to intellectual derangement. She was "ower easy," they said, when the talk had been of prudence or worldly prospect; she was "ower hard," they said, when the question had been of right and wrong.

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The same afternoon, a neighbor on her way over the shoulder of the hill to the next village, had called upon her and found her brushing the rafters of her cottage with a broom at the end of a long stick.

"Save's a', Janet! what are ye after? I never saw sic a thing!" she exclaimed.

"I kennae hoo I never thought o' sic a thing afore," answered Janet, leaning her broom against the wall, and dusting a chair for her visitor; "but this mornin', whan my man an' me was sittin' at oor brakfast, there cam' sic a clap o' thunner, 'at it jist garred the bit hoosie trim'le; an' doon fell a snot o' soot until the very spune 'at my man was cairryin' till's honest moo. That cudna be as things war inten'it, ye ken; sae what was to be said but set them richt?"

"Ow, weel! but ye might hae waitit till Donal cam' home; he wad hae dune 't in half the time, an' no raxed his jints."

"I cudna pit it aff," answered Janet. "Wha kenned whan the Lord might come? — He canna come at cock-crawlin' the day, but he may be here afore nicht."

"Weel, I s' awa," said her visitor rising. "I'm gauin' ower to the toon to buy a few hanks o' werset to weyve a pair o' stockings to my man. Guid day to ye, Janet. — What neist, I won'er?" she added to herself as she left the house. "The wuman's clear dementit!"

The moment she was gone, Janet caught up her broom again, and went spying about over the roof — ceiling there was none — after long *tangles* of agglomerated cobweb and smoke.

"Ay!" she said to herself, "wha kens whan he may be at the door! an' I wadna like to hear him say — 'Janet, ye might ha'e had yer hoose a bit cleaner, whan ye kenned I might be at han'!'

With all the cleaning she could give it, her cottage would have looked but a place of misery to many a benevolent woman, who, if she had lived there, would not have been so benevolent as Janet, or have kept the place half so clean. For her soul was alive and rich, and out of her soul, not education or habit, came the smallest of her virtues. — Having finished at last, she took her besom to the door, and beat it against a stone. That done, she stood looking along the path down the hill. It was that by which her sons and daughters, every Saturday, came climbing, one after the other, to her bosom, from their various labors in the valley below, through the sunset, through the long twilight, through the moonlight, each urged by a heart eager to look again upon father and mother.

The sun was now far down his western arc, and nearly on a level with her eyes; and as she gazed into the darkness of the too much light, suddenly emerged from it, rose upward, staggered towards her — was it an angel? was it a spectre? Did her old eyes deceive her? — or was the second sight born in her now first in her old age? — It seemed a child — reeling, and spreading out hands that groped. She covered her eyes for a moment, for it might be a vision in the sun, not on the earth — and looked again. It was indeed a naked child! and — was she still so dazzled by the red sun as to see red where red was none? — or were those indeed blood-red streaks on his white skin? Straight now, though slow, he came towards her. It was the same child who had come and gone so strangely before! He held out his hands to her, and fell on his face at her feet like one dead. Then, with a horror of pitiful amazement, she saw a great cross marked in two cruel stripes on his back; and the thoughts that thereupon went coursing through her loving imagination, it would be hard to set forth. Could it be that the Lord was still, child and man, suffering for his race, to deliver his brothers and sisters from their sins? — wandering, enduring, beaten, blessing still? accepting the evil, slaying it, and returning none? his patience the one rock where the evil word finds no echo; his heart the one gulf into which the dead-sea wave rushes with no recoil — from which ever flows back only purest water, sweet and cool; the one abyss of destroying love, into which all wrong tumbles, and finding no reaction, is lost, ceases forevermore; there, in its own cradle, the primal order is still nursed, still restored; thence is it still sent forth afresh, to leaven with new life the world ever aging! Shadowy and vague they were — but vaguely shadowed were thoughts like these in Janet's mind, as she stood half-stunned, regarding for one moment motionless the prostrate child and his wrongs. The next she lifted him in her arms, and holding him tenderly to her mother-heart, carried him into the house, murmuring over him dove-like sounds of pity and endearment mingled with indignation. There she laid him on his side in her bed, covered him gently over, and hastened to the little byre at the end of the cottage, to get him some warm milk. When she returned, he had already lifted his heavy eyelids, and was looking wearily about the place. But when he saw her, did ever so bright a sun shine as that smile of his! Eyes and mouth and whole face

flashed upon Janet! She set down the milk, and went to the bedside. Gibbie put up his arms, threw them round her neck, and clung to her as if she had been his mother. And from that moment she was his mother: her heart was big enough to mother all the children of humanity. She was like Charity herself, with her babes innumerable.

"What have they done to ye, my bairn?" she said, in tones pitiful with the pity of the Shepherd of the sheep himself.

No reply came back — only another heavenly smile, a smile of absolute content. For what were stripes and nakedness and hunger to Gibbie, now that he had a woman to love! Gibbie's necessity was to love; but here was more; here was Love offering herself to him! Except in black Sambo he had scarcely caught a good sight of her before. He had never before been kissed by that might of God's grace, a true woman. She was an old woman who kissed him; but none who have drunk of the old wine of love, straightway desire the new, for they know that the old is better. Match such as hers with thy love, maiden of twenty, and where will thou find the man, I say not worthy, but fit to mate with thee? For hers was love indeed — not the love of love — but the love of Life. Already Gibbie's faintness was gone — and all his ills with it. She raised him with one arm, and held the bowl to his mouth, and he drank; but all the time he drank, his eyes were fixed upon hers. When she laid him down again, he turned on his side, off his scored back, and in a moment was fast asleep. She stood gazing at him. So still was he, that she began to fear he was dead, and laid her hand on his heart. It was beating steadily, and she left him, to make some gruel for him against his waking. Her soul was glad, for she was ministering to her master, not the less in his own self, that it was in the person of one of his own little ones. Gruel, as such a one makes it, is no common fare, but delicate enough for a queen. She set it down by the fire, and proceeded to lay the supper for her expected children. The clean yellow-white table of soft smooth fir, needed no cloth — only horn spoons and wooden caups.

At length a hand came to the latch, and mother and daughter greeted, as mother and daughter only can; then came a son, and mother and son greeted as mother and son only can. They kept on arriving singly to the number of six — two daughters and four sons, the youngest some little time

after the rest. Each, as he or she came, Janet took to the bed, and showed her seventh child where he slept. Each time she showed him, to secure like pity with her own, she turned down the bedclothes, and revealed the little back, smitten with the eternal memorial of the divine perfection. The women wept. The young men were furious, each after his fashion.

"God damn the rascal 'at did it!" cried one of them, clenching his teeth, and forgetting himself quite in the rage of the moment.

"Laddie, tak back the word," said his mother calmly. "Gien ye dinna forgie yer enemies, ye'll no be forgi'en yersel'!"

"That's some hard, mither," answered the offender, with an attempted smile.

"Hard!" she echoed; "it may weel be hard, for it canna be helpit. What wad be the use o' forgiein' ye, or hoo cud it win at ye, or what wad ye care for't, or mak o't, cairryin' a hell o' hate i' yer verra hert? For gien God be love, hell maun be hate. My bairn, them 'at winna forgie their enemies, cairries sic a nest o' deevilry i' their ain boasoms, 'at the verra speerit o' God himself' canna win in till' for bein' scammed wi' smell an'reik. Muckle guid wad ony pardon dee to sic! But ance lat them un'erstan' 'at he canna forgie them, an' maybe they'll be fleyt, an' turn again' the Sawtan 'ats i' them."

"Weel, but he's no *my* enemy," said the youth.

"No your enemy!" returned his mother; "— no your enemy, an' sair (*serve*) a bairn like that! My certy! but he's the enemy o' the haill race o' mankin'. He trespasses unco sair against *me*, I'm weel sure o' that! An' I'm glaid o' t'. I'm glaid 'at he has me for ane o' s enemies, for I forgie him for ane; an' wuss him sae affrontit wi' himself' er' a' be done, 'at he wad fain hide his heid in a midden."

"Noo, noo, mither!" said the eldest son, who had not yet spoken, but whose countenance had been showing a mighty indignation, "that's surely as sair a bannin' as you 'at Jock said."

"What, laddie! Wad ye hae a fellow-cratur live to a' eternity ohn been ashamed o' sic a thing's that? Wad that be to wuss him weel? Kenna ye 'at the mair shame the mair grace? My word was the best beginnin' o' better 'at I cud wuss him. Na, na, laddie! frae my verra hert I wuss he may be that affrontit wi' himself' 'at he canna sae muckle as lift up's een to h'aven, but maun smite upo' s breist an' say, 'God be mercifu' to me a sinner!' That's my curse upo' *him*, for I wadna hae im a dee-

vil. Whan he comes to think that shame o' himself', I'll tak him to my hert, as I tak the bairn he misguidit. Only I doobt I'll be lang awa afore that, for it takts time to fess a man like that till's holy sanses."

The sixth of the family now entered, and his mother led him up to the bed.

"The Lord preserve's!" cried Donal Grant, "it's the cratur! — An' is that the gait they hae guidit him! The quietest cratur an' the willin'est!"

Donal began to choke.

"Ye ken him than, laddie?" said his mother.

"Weel that," answered Donal. "He's been wi' me an' the nowt ilka day for weeks till the day."

With that he hurried into the story of his acquaintance with Gibbie; and the fable of the brownie would soon have disappeared from Daurside, had it not been that Janet desired them to say nothing about the boy, but let him be forgotten by his enemies, till he grew able to take care of himself. Besides, she said, their father might get into trouble with the master and the laird, if it were known they had him.

Donal vowed to himself, that, if Fergus had had a hand in the abuse, he would never speak civil word to him again.

He turned towards the bed, and there were Gibbie's azure eyes wide open and fixed upon him.

"Eh, ye cratur!" he cried; and darting to the bed, he took Gibbie's face between his hands, and said, in a voice to which pity and sympathy gave a tone like his mother's,

"Whaten a deevil was't 'at lickit ye like that? Eh! I wuss I had the trimmin' o' him!"

Gibbie smiled.

"Has the ill-guideship ta'en the tongue frae 'im, think ye?" asked the mother.

"Na, na," answered Donal; "he's been like that sin' ever I kenned him. I never h'ard word frae the moo' o' 'm."

"He'll be ane o' the deaf an' dumb," said Janet.

"He's no deaf, mither; that I ken weel; but dumb he maun be, I'm thinkin'. — Cratur," he continued, stooping over the boy, "gien ye hear what I'm sayin', tak haud o' my nose."

Thereupon, with a laugh like that of an amused infant, Gibbie raised his hand, and with thumb and forefinger gently pinched Donal's large nose, at which they all burst out laughing with joy. It was as if they had found an angel's baby in the bushes, and been afraid he was an idiot, but were now relieved. Away went Janet, and

brought him his gruel. It was with no small difficulty and not without a moan or two, that Gibbie sat up in the bed to take it. There was something very pathetic in the full content with which he sat there in his nakedness, and looked smiling at them all. It was more than content—it was bliss that shone in his countenance. He took the wooden bowl, and began to eat; and the look he cast on Janet seemed to say he had never tasted such delicious food. Indeed he never had; and the poor cottage, where once more he was a stranger and taken in, appeared to Gibbie a place of wondrous wealth. And so it was—not only in the best treasures, those of loving kindness, but in all homely plenty as well for the needs of the body—a very temple of the God of simplicity and comfort—rich in warmth and rest and food.

Janet went to her *list*, whence she brought out a garment of her own, and aired it at the fire. It had no lace at the neck or cuffs, no embroidery down the front; but when she put it on him, amid the tearful laughter of the women, and had tied it round his waist with a piece of list that had served as a garter, it made a dress most becoming in their eyes, and gave Gibbie indescribable pleasure from its whiteness, and its coolness to his inflamed skin.

They had just finished clothing him thus, when the goodman came home, and the mother's narration had to be given afresh, with Donal's notes explanatory and compleutive. As the latter reported the doings of the imagined brownie, and the commotion they had caused at the Mains and along Daurside, Gibbie's countenance flashed with pleasure and fun; and at last he broke into such a peal of laughter as had never, for pure merriment, been heard before so high on Glashgar. All joined involuntarily in the laugh—even the old man, who had been listening with his gray eyebrows knit and hanging like bosky precipices over the tarns of his deep-set eyes, taking in every word, but uttering not one. When at last his wife showed him the child's back, he lifted his two hands, and moved them slowly up and down, as in pitiful appeal for man against man to the sire of the race. But still he said not a word. As to utterance of what lay in the deep soul of him, the old man, except sometimes to his wife, was nearly as dumb as Gibbie himself.

They sat down to their homely meal. Simplest things will carry the result of honest attention as plainly as more elaborate dishes; and, which it might be well to consider, they will carry no more than

they are worth: of Janet's supper it is enough to say that it was such as became her heart. In the judgment of all her guests, the porridge was such as none could make but mother, the milk such as none but mother's cow could yield, the cakes such as she only could bake.

Gibbie sat in the bed like a king on his throne, gazing on his kingdom. For he that loves has, as no one else has. It is the divine possession. Picture the delight of the child, in his passion for his kind, looking out upon this company of true hearts, honest faces, human forms—all strong and healthy, loving each other, and generous to the taking in of the world's outcast! Gibbie could not, at that period of his history, have invented a heaven more to his mind, and as often as one of them turned eyes towards the bed, his face shone up with love and merry gratitude, like a better sun.

It was now almost time for the sons and daughters to go down the hill again, and leave the cottage and the harbored child to the night, the mountain-silence, and the living God. The sun had long been down; but far away in the north, the faint thin fringe of his light-garment was still visible, moving with the unseen body of his glory softly eastward, dreaming along the horizon, growing fainter and fainter as it went, but at the faintest then beginning to revive and grow. Of the northern lands in summer, it may be said, as of the heaven of heavens, that there is no night there. And by-and-by the moon also would attend the steps of the returning children of labor.

"Noo, lads an' lasses, afore we hae worship, rin, ill aye o' ye," said the mother, "an' pu heather to mak a bed to the wee man—i' the neuk there, at the heid o' oors. He'll sleep there bonny, an' no ill 'ill come near 'im."

She was obeyed instantly. The heather was pulled, and set together upright as it grew, only much closer, so that the tops made a dense surface, and the many stalks, each weak, a strong upbearing whole. They boxed them in below with a board or two for the purpose, and bound them together above with a blanket over the top, and a white sheet over that—a linen sheet it was, and large enough to be doubled and receive Gibbie between its folds. Then another blanket was added, and the bed, a perfect one, was ready. The eldest of the daughters took Gibbie in her arms, and, tenderly careful over his hurts, lifted him from the old folks' bed, and placed him in his own—one more

'luxurious, for heather makes a still better stratum for repose than oat-chaff — and Gibbie sank into it with a sigh that was but a smile grown vocal.

Then Donal, as the youngest, got down the big Bible, and having laid it before his father, lighted the rush-pith-wick projecting from the beak of the little iron lamp that hung against the wall, its shape descended from Roman times. The old man put on his spectacles, took the book, and found the passage that fell, in continuous process, to that evening.

Now he was not a very good reader, and, what with blindness, and spectacles, and poor light, would sometimes lose his place. But it never troubled him, for he always knew the sense of what was coming, and being no idolater of the letter, used the word that first suggested itself, and so recovered his place without pausing. It reminded his sons and daughters of the time when he used to tell them Bible stories as they crowded about his knees; and sounding therefore merely like the substitution of a more familiar word to assist their comprehension, woke no surprise. And even now, the word supplied, being in the vernacular, was rather to the benefit than the disadvantage of his hearers. The word of Christ is spirit and life, and where the heart is aglow, the tongue will follow that spirit and life fearlessly, and will not err.

On this occasion he was reading of our Lord's cure of the leper; and having read, "*put forth his hand*," lost his place, and went straight on without it, from his memory of the facts.

"He put forth his han' — an' grippit him, an' said, Aw wull — be clean."

After the reading followed a prayer, very solemn and devout. It was then only, when before God, with his wife by his side, and his family around him, that the old man became articulate. He would scarcely have been so then, and would have floundered greatly in the marshes of his mental chaos, but for the stepping stones of certain theological forms and phrases, which were of endless service to him in that they helped him to utter what in him was far better, and so realize more to himself his own feelings. Those forms and phrases would have shocked any devout Christian who had not been brought up in the same school: but they did him little harm, for he saw only the good that was in them, and indeed did not understand them save in so far as they worded that lifting up of the heart after which he was ever striving.

By the time the prayer was over, Gibbie was fast asleep again. What it all meant he had not an idea; and the sound lulled him — a service often so rendered in lieu of that intended. When he woke next, from the aching of his stripes, the cottage was dark. The old people were fast asleep. A hairy thing lay by his side, which, without the least fear, he examined by palpation, and found to be a dog, whereupon he fell fast asleep again, if possible happier than ever. And while the cottage was thus quiet, the brothers and sisters were still tramping along the moonlit paths of Daurside. They had all set out together, but at one point after another there had been a parting, and now they were on six different roads, each drawing nearer to the labor of the new week.

CHAPTER II.

MORE SCHOOLING.

THE first opportunity Donal had, he questioned Fergus as to his share in the ill-usage of Gibbie. Fergus treated the inquiry as an impertinent interference, and mounted his high horse at once. What right had his father's herd-boy to question him as to his conduct? He put it so to him and in nearly just as many words. Thereupon answered Donal —

"It's this, ye see, Fergus: ye hae been unco guid to me, an' I'm mair obligatit till ye nor I can say. But it wad be a scunnerfu' thing to tak the len' o' buiks frae ye, an' speir quest'ons at ye 'at I canna mact oot myself', an' syne gang awa despisin' ye i' my hert for cruelty an' wrang. What was the cratur punished for? Tell me that. Accordin' till yer aunt's ain account, he had taen naething, an' had dune nae-thing but guid."

"Why didn't he speak up then, and defend himself, and not be so damned obstinate?" returned Fergus. "He wouldn't open his mouth to tell his name, or where he came from even. I couldn't get him to utter a single word. As for his punishment, it was by the laird's orders that Angus Mac Pholp took the whip to him. I had nothing to do with it." — Fergus did not consider the punishment he had himself given him as worth mentioning — as indeed, except for honesty's sake, it was not, beside the other.

"Weel, I'll be a man some day, an' Angus'll hae to sattle wi' me!" said Donal through his clenched teeth. "Man, Fergus! the cratur's as dumb's a worum. I dinna believe 'at ever he spak a word in's life."

This cut Fergus to the heart, for he was far from being without generosity or pity. How many things a man who is not awake to side strenuously with the good in him against the evil, who is not on his guard lest himself should mislead himself, may do, of which he will one day be bitterly ashamed! — a trite remark, it may be, but, reader, that will make the thing itself no easier to bear, should you ever come to know you have done a thing of the sort. I fear, however, from what I know of Fergus afterwards, that he now, instead of seeking about to make some amends, turned the strength that should have gone in that direction, to the justifying of himself to himself in what he had done. Anyhow, he was far too proud to confess to Donal that he had done wrong — too much offended at being rebuked by one he counted so immeasurably his inferior, to do the right thing his rebuke set before him. What did the mighty business matter! The little rascal was nothing but a tramp; and if he didn't deserve his punishment this time, he had deserved it a hundred times without having it, and would ten thousand times again. So reasoned Fergus, while the feeling grew upon Donal that *the cratur* was of some superior race — came from some other and nobler world. I would remind my reader that Donal was a Celt, with a nature open to every fancy of love or awe — one of the same breed with the foolish Galatians, and like them ready to be bewitched; but bearing a heart that welcomed the light with glad rebound — loved the lovely, nor loved it only, but turned towards it with desire to become like to it. Fergus too was a Celt in the main, but was spoiled by the paltry ambition of being distinguished. He was not in love with loveliness, but in love with praise. He saw not a little of what was good and noble, and would fain be such, but mainly that men might regard him for his goodness and nobility; hence his practical notion of the good was weak, and of the noble, paltry. His one desire in doing anything, was to be approved of or admired in the same — approved of in the opinions he held, in the plans he pursued, in the doctrines he taught; admired in the poems in which he went halting after Byron, and in the eloquence with which he meant one day to astonish great congregations. There was nothing original as yet discoverable in him; nothing to deliver him from the poor imitative apery in which he imagined himself a poet. He did possess one invaluable gift — that of perceiving and admiring, more than a little, certain

forms of the beautiful; but it was rendered merely ridiculous by being conjoined with the miserable ambition — poor as that of any mountebank emperor — to be himself admired for that admiration. He mistook also sensibility for faculty, nor perceived that it was at best but a probable sign that he might be able to do something or other with pleasure, perhaps with success. If any one judge it hard that men should be made with ambitions to whose objects they can never attain, I answer, ambition is but the evil shadow of aspiration; and no man ever followed the truth, which is the one path of aspiration, and in the end complained that he had been made this way or that. Man is made to be that which he is made most capable of desiring — but it goes without saying that he must desire the thing itself and not its shadow. Man is of the truth, and while he follows a lie, no indication his nature yields will hold, except the fear, the discontent, the sickness of soul, that tell him he is wrong. If he say, "I care not for what you call the substance — it is to me the shadow; I want what you call the shadow," the only answer is, that to all eternity, he can never have it: a shadow can never be had.

Ginevra was hardly the same child after the experience of that terrible morning. At no time very much at home with her father, something had now come between them, to remove which all her struggles to love him as before were unavailing. The father was too stupid, too unsympathetic, to take note of the look of fear that crossed her face if ever he addressed her suddenly; and when she was absorbed in fighting the thoughts that *would* come, he took her constraint for sullenness.

With a cold spot in his heart where once had dwelt some genuine regard for Donal, Fergus went back to college. Donal went on herding the cattle, cudgeling Hornie, and reading what books he could lay his hands on: there was no supply through Fergus any more, alas! The year before, ere he took his leave, he had been careful to see Donal provided with at least books for study; but this time he left him to shift for himself. He was small because he was proud, spiteful because he was conceited. He would let Donal know what it was to have lost his favor! But Donal did not suffer much, except in the loss of the friendship itself. He managed to get the loan of a copy of Burns — better meat for a strong spirit than the poetry of Byron or even Scott. An innate cleanliness of soul rendered the occasional coarseness to him harmless, and the mighty torrent of

the man's life, broken by occasional pools reflecting the stars ; its headlong hatred of hypocrisy and false religion ; its generosity and struggling conscientiousness ; its failures and its repentances, roused much in the heart of Donal. Happily the copy he had borrowed, had in it a tolerable biography ; and that, read along with the man's work, enabled him, young as he was, to see something of where and how he had failed, and to shadow out to himself, not altogether vaguely, the perils to which the greatest must be exposed who cannot rule his own spirit, but, like a mere child, reels from one mood into another — at the will of — what ?

From reading Burns, Donal learned also not a little of the capabilities of his own language ; for, Celt as he was by birth and country and mental character, he could not speak the Gaelic : that language, soft as the speech of streams from rugged mountains, and wild as that of the wind in the tops of fir-trees, the language at once of bards and fighting men, had so far ebbed from the region, lingering only here and there in the hollow pools of old memories, that Donal had never learned it ; and the lowland Scotch, an ancient branch of English, dry and gnarled, but still flourishing in its old age, had become, instead, his mother-tongue ; and the man who loves the antique speech, or even the mere patois, of his childhood, and knows how to use it, possesses therein a certain kind of power over the hearts of men, which the most refined and perfect of languages cannot give, inasmuch as it has travelled farther from the original sources of laughter and tears. But the old Scotish itself is, alas ! rapidly vanishing before a poor, shabby imitation of modern English — itself a weaker language in sound, however enriched in words, since the days of Shakspere, when it was far more like Scotch in its utterance than it is now.

My mother-tongue, how sweet thy tone !
How near to good allied !
Were even my heart of steel or stone,
Thou wouldest drive out the pride.

So sings Klaus Groth, in and concerning his own Plattdeutsch — so nearly akin to the English.

To a poet especially is it an inestimable advantage to be able to employ such a language for his purposes. Not only was it the speech of his childhood, when he saw everything with fresh, true eyes, but it is itself a child-speech ; and the child way of saying must always lie nearer the child way of seeing, which is the poetic way. There-

fore, as the poetic faculty was now slowly asserting itself in Donal, it was of vast importance that he should know what the genius of Scotland had been able to do with his homely mother-tongue, for through that tongue alone, could what poetry he had in him have thoroughly fair play, and in turn do its best towards his development — which is the first and greatest use of poetry. It is a ruinous misjudgment — too contemptible to be asserted, but not too contemptible to be acted upon, that the end of poetry is publication. Its true end is to help first the man who makes it along the path to the truth : help for other people may or may not be in it ; that, if it become a question at all, must be an after one. To the man who has it, the gift is invaluable ; and, in proportion as it helps him to be a better man, it is of value to the whole world ; but it may, in itself, be so nearly worthless, that the publishing of it would be more for harm than good. Ask any one who has had to perform the unenviable duty of editor to a magazine : he will corroborate what I say — that the quantity of verse good enough to be its own reward, but without the smallest claim to be uttered to the world, is enormous.

Not yet, however, had Donal written a single stanza. A line, or at most two, would now and then come into his head with a buzz, like a wandering honey-bee that had mistaken its hive — generally in the shape of a humorous malediction on Hornie — but that was all.

In the mean time Gibbie slept and waked and slept again, night after night — with the loveliest days between, at the cottage on Glashgar. The morning after his arrival, the first thing he was aware of was Janet's face beaming over him, with a look in its eyes more like worship than benevolence. Her husband was gone, and she was about to milk the cow, and was anxious lest, while she was away, he should disappear as before. But the light that rushed into his eyes was in full response to that which kindled the light in hers, and her misgiving vanished : he could not love her like that and leave her. She gave him his breakfast of porridge and milk, and went to her cow.

When she came back, she found everything tidy in the cottage, the floor swept, every dish washed and set aside ; and Gibbie was examining an old shoe of Robert's, to see whether he could not mend it. Janet, having therefore leisure, proceeded at once with joy to the construction of a garment she had been devising for him. The design was simple, and its execution

easy. Taking a blue winsey petticoat of her own, drawing it in round his waist, and tying it over the chemise which was his only garment, she found, as she had expected, that its hem reached his feet: she partly divided it up the middle, before and behind, and had but to backstitch two short seams, and there was a pair of sailor-like trousers, as tidy as comfortable! Gibbie was delighted with them. True, they had no pockets, but then he had nothing to put in pockets, and one might come to think of that as an advantage. Gibbie indeed had never had pockets, for the pockets of the garments he had had were always worn out before they reached him. Then Janet thought about a cap; but considering him a moment critically, and seeing how his hair stood out like thatch-eaves round his head, she concluded with herself, "There maun be some men as weel's women fowk, I'm thinkin', whause hair's gien them for a coverin'," and betook herself instead to her New Testament.

Gibbie stood by as she read in silence, gazing with delight, for he thought it must be a book of ballads like Donal's that she was reading. But Janet found his presence, his unresting attitude, and his gaze, discomposing. To worship freely, one must be alone, or else with fellow-worshippers. And reading and worshipping were often so mingled with Janet, as to form but one mental consciousness. She looked up therefore from her book, and said —

"Can ye read, laddie?"

Gibbie shook his head.

"Sit ye doon than, an I s' read till ye."

Gibbie obeyed more than willingly, expecting to hear some ancient Scots tale of love or chivalry. Instead, it was one of those love-awful glory-sad chapters in the end of the Gospel of John, over which hangs the darkest cloud of human sorrow, shot through and through with the radiance of light eternal, essential, invincible. Whether it was the uncertain response to Janet's tone merely, or to truth too loud to be heard save as a thrill, of some chord in his own spirit, having its one end indeed twisted around an earthly peg, but the other looped to a tail-piece far in the unknown — I cannot tell; it may have been that the name now and then recurring brought to his mind the last words of poor Sambo; anyhow, when Janet looked up, she saw the tears rolling down the child's face. At the same time, from the expression of his countenance, she judged that his understanding had grasped nothing. She turned therefore to the parable of the prodigal son, and read it. Even that had

not a few words and phrases unknown to Gibbie, but he did not fail to catch the drift of the perfect story. For had not Gibbie himself had a father, to whose bosom he went home every night? Let but love be the interpreter, and what most wretched type will not serve the turn for the carriage of profoundest truth! The prodigal's lowest degradation, Gibbie did not understand; but Janet saw the expression of the boy's face alter with every tone of the tale, through all the gamut between the swines' trough and the arms of the father. Then at last he burst — not into tears — Gibbie was not much acquainted with weeping — but into a laugh of loud triumph. He clapped his hands, and in a shiver of ecstasy, stood like a stork upon one leg, as if so much of him was all that could be spared for this lower world, and screwed himself together.

Janet was well satisfied with her experiment. Most Scotch women and more than most Scotch men, would have rebuked him for laughing, but Janet knew in herself a certain tension of delight which nothing served to relieve but a wild laughter of holiest gladness; and never in tears of deepest emotion did her heart appeal more directly to its God. It is the heart that is not yet sure of its God, that is afraid to laugh in his presence.

Thus had Gibbie his first lesson in the only thing worth learning, in that which, to be learned at all, demands the united energy of heart and soul and strength and mind; and from that day he went on learning it. I cannot tell how, or what were the slow stages by which his mind budded and swelled until it burst into the flower of humanity, the knowledge of God. I cannot tell the shape of the door by which the Lord entered into that house, and took everlasting possession of it. I cannot even tell in what shape he appeared himself in Gibbie's thoughts — for the Lord can take any shape that is human. I only know it was not any unhuman shape of earthly theology that he bore to Gibbie, when he saw him with "that inward eye, which is the bliss of solitude." For happily Janet never suspected how utter was Gibbie's ignorance. She never dreamed that he did not know what was generally said about Jesus Christ. She thought he must know as well as she the outlines of his story, and the purpose of his life and death, as commonly taught, and therefore never attempted explanations for the sake of which she would probably have found herself driven to use terms and phrases which merely substitute that which is intel-

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ligible because it appeals to what in us is low, and is itself both low and false, for that which, if unintelligible, is so because of its grandeur and truth. Gibbie's ideas of God he got all from the mouth of Theology himself, the Word of God; and to the theologian who will not be content with his teaching, the disciple of Jesus must just turn his back, that his face may be to his Master.

So teaching him only that which she loved, not that which she had been taught, Janet read to Gibbie of Jesus, talked to him of Jesus, dreamed to him about Jesus; until at length — Gibbie did not think to watch, and knew nothing of the process by which it came about — his whole soul was full of the man, of his doings, of his words, of his thoughts, of his life. Jesus Christ was in him — he was possessed by him. Almost before he knew, he was trying to fashion his life after that of his Master.

Between the two, it was a sweet teaching, a sweet learning. Under Janet, Gibbie was saved the thousand agonies that befall the conscientious disciple, from the forcing upon him, as the thoughts and will of the eternal father of our spirits, of the ill expressed and worse understood experience, the crude conjectures, the vulgar imaginations of would-be teachers of the multitude. Containing truth enough to save those of sufficiently low development to receive such teaching without disgust, it contains falsehood enough, but for the spirit of God, to ruin all nobler — I mean all childlike natures, utterly; and many such it has gone far to ruin, driving them even to a madness in which they have died. Jesus alone knows the Father, and can reveal him. Janet studied only Jesus, and as a man knows his friend, so she, only infinitely better, knew her more than friend — her Lord and her God. Do I speak of a poor Scotch peasant woman too largely for the reader whose test of truth is the notion of probability he draws from his own experience? Let me put one question to make the real probability clearer. Should it be any wonder, if Christ be indeed the natural Lord of every man, woman, and child, that a simple, capable nature, laying itself entirely open to him and his influences, should understand him? How should he be the Lord of that nature if such a thing were not possible, or were at all improbable — nay if such a thing did not necessarily follow? Among women, was it not always to peasant women that heavenly messages came? See revelation culminate in Elizabeth and Mary, the mothers of John the

Baptist and Jesus. Think how much fitter that it should be so — that they to whom the word of God comes should be women bred in the dignity of a natural life, and familiarity with the large ways of the earth; women of simple and few wants, without distraction, and with time for reflection — compelled to reflection, indeed, from the enduring presence of an unsullied consciousness: for wherever there is a humble, thoughtful nature, into that nature the divine consciousness, that is, the spirit of God, presses as into its own place. Holy women are to be found everywhere, but the prophetess is not so likely to be found in the city as in the hill-country.

Whatever Janet, then, might, perhaps — I do not know — have imagined it her duty to say to Gibbie had she surmised his ignorance, having long ceased to trouble her own head, she had now no inclination to trouble Gibbie's heart with what men call the plan of salvation. It was enough to her to find that he followed her Master. Being in the light she understood the light, and had no need of system, either true or false, to explain it to her. She lived by the word proceeding out of the mouth of God. When life begins to speculate upon itself, I suspect it has begun to die. And seldom has there been a fitter soul, one cleaner from evil, from folly, from device — a purer cistern for such water of life as rose in the heart of Janet Grant to pour itself into, than the soul of Sir Gibbie. But I must not call any true soul a cistern: wherever the water of life is received, it sinks and softens and hollows, until it reaches, far down, the springs of life there also, that come straight from the eternal hills, and thenceforth there is in that soul a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

CHAPTER III. THE SLATE.

FROM that very next day, then, after he was received into the cottage on Glashgar, Gibbie, as a matter of course, took upon him the work his hand could find to do, and Janet averred to her husband that never had any of her daughters been more useful to her. At the same time, however, she insisted that Robert should take the boy out with him. She would not have him do woman's work, especially work for which she was herself perfectly able. She had not come to her years, she said, to learn idleness; and the boy would save Robert many a weary step among the hills.

"He canna speyk to the dog," objected Robert, giving utterance to the first difficulty that suggested itself.

"The dog canna speyk himsel'," returned Janet, "an' the won'er is he can un'erstan': wha kens but he may come full nigher ane 'at's speechless like himself! Ye gie the cratur the chance, an' I s' warran' he'll mak himself plain to the dog. Ye jist try 'im. Tell ye him to tell the dog sae an sae, an' see what 'll come o' t'."

Robert made the experiment, and it proved satisfactory. As soon as he had received Robert's orders, Gibbie claimed Oscar's attention. The dog looked up in his face, noted every glance and gesture, and, partly from sympathetic instinct, that gift lying so near the very essence of life, partly from observation of the state of affairs in respect of the sheep, divined with certainty what the duty required of him was, and was off like a shot.

"The twa dumb craturs un'erstan' ane anither better nor I un'erstan' anither o' them," said Robert to his wife when they came home.

And now indeed it was a blessed time for Gibbie. It had been pleasant down in the valley, with the cattle and Donal, and foul weather sometimes; but now it was the full glow of summer; the sweet keen air of the mountain bathed him as he ran, entered into him, filled him with life like the new wine of the kingdom of God, and the whole world rose in its glory around him. Surely it is not the outspread sea, however the sight of its storms and its laboring ships may enhance the sense of safety to the onlooker, but the outspread land of peace and plenty, with its nestling houses, its well-stocked yards, its cattle feeding in the meadows, and its men and horses at labor in the fields, that gives the deepest delight to the heart of the poet! Gibbie was one of the meek, and inherited the earth. Throned on the mountain, he beheld the multiform "goings on of life," and in love possessed the whole. He was of the poet-kind also, and now that he was a shepherd, saw everything with shepherd-eyes. One moment, to his fancy, the great sun above played the shepherd to the world, the winds were the dogs, and the men and women the sheep. The next, in higher mood, he would remember the good shepherd of whom Janet had read to him, and pat the head of the collie that lay beside him: Oscar too was a shepherd and no hireling; he fed the sheep; he turned them from danger and barrenness; and he barked well.

"I'm the dumb dog!" said Gibbie to himself, not knowing that he was really a copy in small of the good shepherd; "but maybe there may be mair nor ae gait o' barking!"

Then what a joy it was to the heaven-born obedience of the child, to hearken to every word, watch every look, divine every wish of the old man! Child Hercules could not have waited on mighty old Saturn as Gibbie waited on Robert. For he was to him the embodiment of all that was reverend and worthy, a very gulf of wisdom, a mountain of rectitude. Gibbie was one of those few elect natures to whom obedience is a delight—a creature so different from the vulgar that they have but one tentacle they can reach such with—that of contempt.

"I jist lo'e the bairn as the verra aipple o' my ee," said Robert. "I can scarce consaive a wuss, but there's the cratur wi' a grip o' t'! He seems to ken what's risin' i', my min', an' in a moment he's up like the dog to be ready, an' luiks at me waitin'!"

Nor was it long before the town-bred child grew to love the heavens almost as dearly as the earth. He would gaze and gaze at the clouds as they came and went, and watching them and the wind, weighing the heat and the cold, and marking many indications, known some of them perhaps only to himself, understood the signs of the earthly times at length nearly as well as an insect or a swallow, and far better than long-experienced old Robert. The mountain was Gibbie's very home; yet to see him far up on it, in the red glow of the setting sun, with his dog, as obedient as himself, hanging upon his every signal, one could have fancied him a shepherd boy come down from the plains of heaven to look after a lost lamb. Often, when the two old people were in bed and asleep, Gibbie would be out watching the moon rise—seated, still as ruined god of Egypt, on a stone of the mountain-side, islanded in space, nothing alive and visible near him, perhaps not even a solitary night-wind blowing and ceasing like the breath of a man's life, and the awfully silent moon sliding up from the hollow of a valley below. If there be indeed a one spirit, ever awake and aware, should it be hard to believe that that spirit should then hold common thought with a little spirit of its own? If the nightly mountain was the prayer-closet of him who said he would be with his disciples to the end of the world, can it be folly to think he would hold talk with such a child, alone under the heaven, in the presence of the father of both? Gib-

bie never thought about himself, therefore was there wide room for the entrance of the spirit. Does the questioning thought arise to any reader: How could a man be conscious of bliss without the thought of himself? I answer the doubt: When a man turns to look at himself, that moment the glow of the loftiest bliss begins to fade; the pulsing fireflies throb paler in the passionate night; an unseen vapor steams up from the marsh and dims the star-crowded sky and the azure sea; and the next moment the very bliss itself looks as if it had never been more than a phosphorescent gleam — the summer lightning of the brain. For then the man sees himself but in his own dim mirror, whereas ere he turned to look in that, he knew himself in the absolute clarity of God's present thought out-bodying him. The shoots of glad consciousness that come to the obedient man, surpass in bliss whole days and years of such ravined rapture as he gains whose weariness is ever spurring the sides of his intent towards the ever retreating goal of his desires. I am a traitor even to myself if I would live without my life.

But I withhold my pen; for vain were the fancy, by treatise or sermon or poem or tale to persuade a man to forget himself. He cannot if he would. Sooner will he forget the presence of a raging tooth. There is no forgetting of ourselves but in the finding of our deeper, our true self — God's idea of us when he devised us — the Christ in us. Nothing but that self can displace the false, greedy, whining self, of which most of us are so fond and proud. And that self no man can find for himself; seeing of himself he does not even know what to search for. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

Then there was the delight, fresh every week, of the Saturday gathering of the brothers and sisters, whom Gibbie could hardly have loved more, had they been of his own immediate kin. Dearest of all was Donal, whose greeting — "Weel, cratur," was heavenly in Gibbie's ears. Donal would have had him go down and spend a day, every now and then, with him and the *nowt*, as in old times — so soon the times grow old to the young! — but Janet would not hear of it, until the foolish tale of the brownie should have quite blown over.

"Eh, but I wuss," she added, as she said so, "I cud win at something about his fowk, or aiven whaur he cam frae, or what they ca'd him! Never ae word has the cratur spoken!"

"Ye sud learn him to read, mither," said Donal.

"Hoo wad I du that, laddie? I wad hae to learn him to speyk first," returned Janet.

"Lat 'im come doon to me, an' I'll try my han'," said Donal.

Janet, notwithstanding, persisted in her refusal — for the present. By Donal's words set thinking of the matter, however, she now pondered the question day after day, how she might teach him to read; and at last the idea dawned upon her to substitute writing for speech.

She took the Shorter Catechism, which, in those days, had always an alphabet as janitor to the gates of its mysteries — who, with the catechism as a consequence even dimly foreboded, would even have learned it? — and showed Gibbie the letters, naming each several times, and going over them repeatedly. Then she gave him Donal's school-slate, with a *skeleton*, and said, "Noo, mak a muckle A, cratur."

Gibbie did so, and well too: she found that already he knew about half the letters.

"He's no fule!" she said to herself in triumph.

The other half soon followed; and she then began to show him words — not in the catechism, but in the New Testament. Having told him what any word was, and led him to consider the letters composing it, she would desire him to make it on the slate, and he would do so with tolerable accuracy: she was not very severe about the spelling, if only it was plain he knew the word. Ere long he began to devise short ways of making the letters, and soon wrote with remarkable facility in a character modified from the printed letters. When at length Janet saw him take the book by himself, and sit pondering over it, she had not a doubt he was understanding it, and her heart leapt for joy. He had to ask her a good many words at first, and often the meaning of one and of another; but he seldom asked a question twice; and as his understanding was far ahead of his reading, he was able to test a conjectured meaning by the sense or nonsense it made of the passage.

One day she turned him to the parphrases.* At once, to his astonishment, he found there, all silent, yet still the same delight which Donal used to divide to him from the book of *ballants*. His joy was unbounded. He jumped from his seat; he danced, and laughed, and finally stood

* Metrical paraphrases of passages of Scripture, always to be found at the end of the Bibles printed for Scotland.

upon one leg: no other mode of expression but this, the expression of utter failure to express, was of avail to the relief of his feeling.

One day, a few weeks after Gibbie had begun to read by himself, Janet became aware that he was sitting on his stool, in what had come to be called the *cratur's corner*, more than usually absorbed in some attempt with slate and pencil — now ceasing, lost in thought, and now commencing anew. She went near and peeped over his shoulder. At the top of the slate he had written the word *give*, then the word *giving*, and below them, *gib*, then *gibing*; upon these followed *gib* again, and he was now plainly meditating something farther. Suddenly he seemed to find what he wanted, for in haste, almost as if he feared it might escape him, he added a *y*, making the word *giby* — then first lifted his head, and looked round, evidently seeking her. She laid her hand on his head. He jumped up with one of his most radiant smiles, and holding out the slate to her, pointed with his pencil to the word he had just completed. She did not know it for a word, but sounded it as it seemed to stand, making the *g* soft, as I daresay some of my readers, not recognizing in *Gibbie* the diminutive of *Gilbert*, may have treated its more accurate form. He shook his head sharply, and laid the point of his pencil upon the *g* of the *give* written above. Janet had been his teacher too long not to see what he meant, and immediately pronounced the word as he would have it. Upon this he began a wild dance, but sobering suddenly, sat down, and was instantly again absorbed in further attempt. It lasted so long that Janet resumed her previous household occupation. At length he rose, and with thoughtful, doubtful contemplation of what he had done, brought her the slate. There, under the foregone success, he had written the words *galatians* and *breath*, and under them *galbreath*. She read them all, and at the last, which, witnessing to his success, she pronounced to his satisfaction, he began another dance, which again he ended abruptly, to draw her attention once more to the slate. He pointed to the *giby* first, and the *galbreath* next, and she read them together. This time he did not dance, but seemed waiting some result. Upon Janet the idea was dawning that he meant himself, but she was thrown out by the cognomen's correspondence with that of the laird, which suggested that the boy had been merely attempting the name of the great man of the district. With this in

her mind, and doubtfully feeling her way, she essayed the tentative of setting him right in the Christian name, and said: "Thomas — Thomas Galbraith." Gibbie shook his head as before, and again resumed his seat. Presently he brought her the slate, with all the rest rubbed out, and these words standing alone — *sir giby galbreath*. Janet read them aloud, whereupon Gibbie began stabbing his forehead with the point of his slate-pencil, and dancing once more in triumph: he had, he hoped, for the first time in his life, conveyed a fact through words.

"That's what they ca' ye, is't?" said Janet, looking motherly at him: "— Sir Gibbie Galbraith?"

Gibbie nodded vehemently.

"It'll be some nickname the bairns hae gien him," said Janet to herself, but continued to gaze at him, in questioning doubt of her own solution. She could not recall having ever heard of a *Sir* in the family; but ghosts of things forgotten kept rising formless and th' in the sky of her memory: had she never heard of a Sir Somebody Galbraith somewhere? And still she stared at the child, trying to grasp what she could not even see. By this time Gibbie was standing quite still, staring at her in return: he could not think what made her stare so at him.

"Wha ca'd ye that?" said Janet at length, pointing to the slate.

Gibbie took the slate, dropped upon his seat, and after considerable cogitation and effort, brought her the words, *gibyse fapher*. Janet for a moment was puzzled, but when she thought of correcting the *p* with a *t*, Gibbie entirely approved.

"What was yer father, cratur?" she asked.

Gibbie, after a longer pause, and more evident labor than hitherto, brought her the enigmatical word, *asootr*, which, the *Sir* running about in her head, quite defeated Janet. Perceiving his failure, he jumped upon a chair, and reaching after one of Robert's Sunday shoes on the *crap o' the wa'*, the natural shelf running all round the cottage, formed by the top of the wall where the rafters rested, caught hold of it, tumbled with it upon his creepie, took it between his knees, and began a pantomime of the making or mending of the same with such verisimilitude of imitation, that it was clear to Janet he must have been familiar with the processes collectively called shoemaking; and therewith she recognized the word on the slate — *a sutor*. She smiled to herself at the association of name and trade, and concluded

that the *Sir* at least was a nickname. And yet—and yet—whether from the presence of some rudiment of an old memory, or from something about the boy that belonged to a higher style than his present showing, her mind kept swaying in an uncertainty whose very object eluded her.

"What is't yer wull 'at we ca' ye, than, cratur?" she asked, anxious to meet the child's own idea of himself.

He pointed to the *giby*.

"Weel, Gibbie," responded Janet,—and at the word, now for the first time addressed by her to himself, he began dancing more wildly than ever, and ended with standing motionless on one leg: now first and at last he was fully recognized for what he was!—"Weel, Gibbie, I s'ca' ye what ye think fit," said Janet. "An noo gang yer wa's, Gibbie, an' see 'at Crummie's no ower far oot o' sight."

From that hour Gibbie had his name from the whole family—his Christian name only, however, Robert and Janet having agreed it would be wise to avoid whatever might possibly bring the boy again under the notice of the laird. The latter half of his name, they laid aside for him, as parents do a dangerous or over-valuable gift to a child.

CHAPTER IV.

RUMORS.

ALMOST from the first moment of his being domiciled on Glashgar, what with the good food, the fine exercise, the exquisite air, and his great happiness, Gibbie began to grow: and he took to growing so fast that his legs soon shot far out of his winsey garment. But, of all places, that was a small matter in Gormgarnet, where the kilt was as common as trousers. His wiry limbs grew larger without loosing their firmness or elasticity; his chest, the effort in running up hill constantly alternated with the relief of running down, rapidly expanded, and his lungs grew hardy as well as powerful; till he became at length such in wind and muscle, that he could run down a wayward sheep almost as well as Oscar. And his nerve grew also with his body and strength, till his coolness and courage were splendid. Never, when the tide of his affairs ran most in the shallows, had Gibbie had much acquaintance with fears, but now he had for gotten the taste of them, and would have encountered a wild highland bull alone on the mountain, as readily as the Crummie up in her byre.

One afternoon, Donal, having got a half

holiday, by the help of a friend and the favor of Mistress Jean, came home to see his mother, and having greeted her, set out to find Gibbie. He had gone a long way, looking and calling without success, and had come in sight of a certain tiny loch, or tarn, that filled a hollow of the mountain. It was called the Deid Pot; and the old awe, amounting nearly to terror, with which in his childhood he had regarded it, returned upon him the moment he saw the dark gleam of it, nearly as strong as ever—an awe indescribable, arising from mingled feelings of depth, and darkness, and lateral recesses, and unknown serpent-like fishes. The pot, though small in surface, was truly of unknown depth, and had elements of dread about it telling upon far less active imaginations than Donal's. While he stood gazing at it, almost afraid to go nearer, a great splash that echoed from the steep rocks surrounding it, brought his heart into his mouth, and immediately followed a loud barking, in which he recognized the voice of Oscar. Before he had well begun to think what it could mean, Gibbie appeared on the opposite side of the loch, high above its level, on the top of the rocks forming its basin. He began instantly a rapid descent towards the water, where the rocks were so steep, and the footing so precarious, that Oscar wisely remained at the top nor attempted to follow him. Presently the dog caught sight of Donal, where he stood on a lower level, whence the water was comparatively easy of access, and starting off at full speed, joined him, with much demonstration of welcome. But he received little notice from Donal, whose gaze was fixed, with much wonder and more fear, on the descending Gibbie. Some twenty feet from the surface of the loch, he reached a point whence clearly, in Donal's judgment, there was no possibility of farther descent. But Donal was never more mistaken; for that instant Gibbie flashed from the face of the rock head foremost, like a fishing bird into the lake. Donal gave a cry, and ran to the edge of the water, accompanied by Oscar, who, all the time, had showed no anxiety, but had stood wagging his tail, and uttering now and then a little half-disappointed whine; neither now were his motions as he ran other than those of frolic and expectancy. When they reached the loch, there was Gibbie already but a few yards from the only possible landing-place, swimming with one hand, while in the other arm he held a baby lamb, its head lying quite still on his shoulder: it had

been stunned by the fall, but might come round again. Then first Donal began to perceive that *the cratur* was growing an athlete. When he landed, he gave Donal a merry laugh of welcome, but without stopping flew up the hill to take the lamb to its mother. Fresh from the icy water, he ran so fast that it was all Donal could do to keep up with him.

The Deid Pot, then, taught Gibbie what swimming it could, which was not much, and what diving it could, which was more; but the nights of the following summer, when everybody on mountain and valley was asleep, and the moon shone, he would often go down to the Daur, and throwing himself into its deepest reaches, spend hours in lonely sport with water and wind and moon. He had by that time learned things knowing which a man can never be lonesome.

The few goats on the mountain were for a time very inimical to him. So often did they butt him over, causing him sometimes severe bruises, that at last he resolved to try conclusions with them; and when next a goat made a rush at him, he seized him by the horns and wrestled with him m mightily. This exercise once begun, he provoked engagements, until his strength and aptitude were such and so well known, that not a billy-goat on Glashgar would have to do with him. But when he saw that every one of them ran at his approach, Gibbie, who could not bear to be in discord with any creature, changed his behavior towards them, and took equal pains to reconcile them to him — nor rested before he had entirely succeeded.

Every time Donal came home, he would bring some book of verse with him, and, leading Gibbie to some hollow, shady or sheltered as the time required, would there read to him ballads, or songs, or verse more stately, as mood or provision might suggest. The music, the melody and the cadence and the harmony, the tone and the rhythm and the time and the rime, instead of growing common to him, rejoiced Gibbie more and more every feast, and with ever growing reverence he looked up to Donal as a mighty master magician. But if Donal could have looked down into Gibbie's bosom, he would have seen something there beyond his comprehension. For Gibbie was already in the kingdom of heaven, and Donal would have to suffer, before he would begin even to look about for the door by which a man may enter into it.

I wonder how much Gibbie was indebted to his constrained silence during all

these years. That he lost by it, no one will doubt; that he gained also, a few will admit; though I should find it hard to say what and how great, I cannot doubt it bore an important part in the fostering of such thoughts and feelings and actions as were beyond the vision of Donal, poet as he was growing to be. While Donal read, rejoicing in the music both of sound and sense, Gibbie was doing something besides: he was listening with the same ears, and trying to see with the same eyes which he brought to bear upon the things Janet taught him out of the book. Already those first weekly issues, lately commenced, of a popular literature had penetrated into the mountains of Gormgarnet; but whether Donal read *Blind Harry* from a thumbed old modern edition, or some new tale or neat poem from the Edinburgh press, Gibbie was always placing what he heard by the side, as it were, of what he knew; asking himself, in this case and that, what Jesus Christ would have done, or what he would require of a disciple. There must be one right way, he argued. Sometimes his innocence failed to see that no disciple of the Son of Man could, save by fearful failure, be in such circumstances as the tale or ballad represented. But whether successful or not in the individual inquiry, the boy's mind and heart and spirit, in this silent, unembarrassed brooding, as energetic as it was peaceful, expanded upwards when it failed to widen, and the widening would come after. Gifted, from the first of his being, with such a strong drawing to his kind, he saw his utmost affection dwarfed by the words and deeds of Jesus — beheld more and more grand the requirements made of a man who would love his fellows as Christ loved them. When he sank foiled from any endeavor to understand how a man was to behave in certain circumstances, these or those, he always took refuge in *doing* something — and doing it better than before; leaped the more eagerly if Robert called him, spoke the more gently to Oscar, turned the sheep more careful not to scare them — as if by instinct he perceived that the only hope of understanding lies in doing. He would cleave to the skirt when the hand seemed withdrawn; he would run to do the thing he had learned yesterday, when as yet he could find no answer to the question of to-day. Thus, as the weeks of solitude and love and thought and obedience glided by, the reality of Christ grew upon him, till he saw the very rocks and heather and the faces of the sheep like him, and felt his presence everywhere, and

ever coming nearer. Nor did his imagination aid only a little in the growth of his being. He would dream waking dreams about Jesus, gloriously childlike. He fancied he came down every now and then to see how things were going in the lower part of his kingdom; and that when he did so, he made use of Glashgar and its rocks for his stair, coming down its granite scale in the morning, and again, when he had ended his visit, going up in the evening by the same steps. Then high and fast would his heart beat at the thought that some day he might come upon his path just when he had passed, see the heather lifting its head from the trail of his garment, or more slowly out of the prints left by his feet, as he walked up the stairs of heaven, going back to his father. Sometimes, when a sheep stopped feeding and looked up suddenly, he would fancy that Jesus had laid his hand on its head, and was now telling it that it must not mind being killed; for he had been killed, and it was all right.

Although he could read the New Testament for himself now, he always preferred making acquaintance with any new portion of it first from the mouth of Janet. Her voice made the word more of a word to him. But the next time he read, it was sure to be what she had then read. She was his priestess; the opening of her Bible was the opening of a window in heaven; her cottage was the porter's lodge to the temple; his very sheep were feeding on the temple-stairs. Smile at such fancies if you will, but think also whether they may not be within sight of the greatest of facts. Of all teachings that which presents a far distant God is the nearest to absurdity. Either there is none, or he is nearer to every one of us than our nearest consciousness of self. An unapproachable divinity is the veriest of monsters, the most horrible of human imaginations.

When the winter came, with its frost and snow, Gibbie saved Robert much suffering. At first Robert was unwilling to let him go out alone in stormy weather; but Janet believed that the child doing the old man's work would be specially protected. All through the hard time therefore, Gibbie went and came, and no evil befell him. Neither did he suffer from the cold; for, a sheep having died towards the end of the first autumn, Robert, in view of Gibbie's coming necessity, had begged of his master the skin, and dressed it with the wool upon it; and of this, between the three of them, they made a coat for him; so that he roamed the hill like a savage, in a garment of skin.

It became, of course, before very long, well known about the country that Mr. Duff's crofters upon Glashgar had taken in and were bringing up a foundling — some said an innocent, some said a wild boy — who helped Robert with his sheep, and Janet with her cow, but could not speak a word of either Gaelic or English. By and by, strange stories came to be told of his exploits, representing him as gifted with bodily powers as much surpassing the common, as his mental faculties were assumed to be under the ordinary standard. The rumor concerning him swelled as well as spread, mainly from the love of the marvellous common in the region, I suppose, until, towards the end of his second year on Glashgar, the notion of Gibbie in the imaginations of the children of Daurside, was that of an almost supernatural being, who had dwelt upon, or rather who had haunted Glashgar from time immemorial, and of whom they had been hearing all their lives; and, although they had never heard anything bad of him — that he was *wild*, that he wore a hairy skin, that he could do more than any other boy dared attempt, that he was dumb, and that yet (for this also was said) sheep and dogs and cattle, and even the wild creatures of the mountain, could understand him perfectly — these statements were more than enough, acting on the suspicion and fear belonging to the savage in their own bosoms, to envelop the idea of him in a mist of dread, deepening to such horror in the case of the more timid and imaginative of them, that when the twilight began to gather about the cottages and farmhouses, the very mention of "the beast-loon o' Glashgar" was enough, and that for miles up and down the river, to send many of the children scouring like startled hares into the house. Gibbie, in his atmosphere of human grace and tenderness, little thought what clouds of foolish fancies, rising from the valleys below, had, by their distorting vapors, made of him an object of terror to those whom at the very first sight he would have loved and served. Amongst these, perhaps the most afraid of him were the children of the game-keeper, for they lived on the very foot of the haunted hill, near the bridge and gate of Glashruach; and the laird himself happened one day to be witness of their fear. He inquired the cause, and yet again was his enlightened soul vexed by the persistency with which the shadows of superstition still hung about his lands. Had he been half as philosophical as he fancied himself, he might have seen that there was not necessarily a single film of super-

sition involved in the belief that a savage roamed a mountain — which was all that Mistress MacPhlop, depriving the rumor of its richer coloring, ventured to impart as the cause of her children's perturbation; but anything a hair's-breadth out of the common, was a thing hated of Thomas Galbraith's soul, and whatever another believed which he did not choose to believe, he set down at once as superstition. He held therefore immediate communication with his gamekeeper on the subject, who in his turn was scandalized that *his* children should have thus proved themselves unworthy of the privileges of their position, and given annoyance to the liberal soul of their master, and took care that both they and his wife should suffer in consequence. The expression of the man's face as he listened to the laird's complaint, would not have been a pleasant sight to any lover of Gibbie; but it had not occurred either to master or man, that the offensive being, whose doubtful existence caused the scandal, was the same towards whom they had once been guilty of such brutality; nor would their knowledge of the fact have been favorable to Gibbie. The same afternoon the laird questioned his tenant of the Mains concerning his cottars; and was assured that better or more respectable people were not in all the region of Gormgarnet.

When Robert became aware, chiefly through the representations of his wife and Donal, of Gibbie's gifts of other kinds than those revealed to himself by his good shepherding, he began to turn it over in his mind, and by and by referred the question to his wife whether they ought not to send the boy to school, that he might learn the things he was so much more than ordinarily capable of learning. Janet would give no immediate opinion. She must think, she said; and she took three days to turn the matter over in her mind. Her questioning cogitation was to this effect: "What need has a man to know anything but what the New Testament teaches him? Life was little to me before I began to understand its good news; now it is more than good — it is grand. But then, man is to live by *every* word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; and everything came out of his mouth, when he said, Let there be this, and Let there be that. Whatever is true is his making, and the more we know of it the better. Besides, how much less of the New Testament would I understand now, if it were not for things I had gone through and learned before!"

"Ay, Robert," she answered, without preface, the third day, "I'm thinkin' there's a heap o' things, gien I hed them, 'at wad help me to ken what the Maister spak till. It wad be a sin no to lat the laddie learn. But wha'll tak the tible needfu' to the learnin' o' a puir dummie?"

"Lat him gang doon to the Mains, an' herd wi' Donal," answered Robert. "He kens a hantle mair nor you or me or Gibbie aither; an' whan he's learnt a' 'at Donal can shaw him, it'll be time to think what neist."

"Weel," answered Janet, "nane can say but that's sense, Robert; an' though I'm laith, for your sake mair nor my ain, to lat the laddie gang, lat him gang to Donal. I houp, atween the twa, they winna lat the nowt amo' the corn."

"The corn's 'maist cuttit noo," replied Robert, "an' for the maitter o' that, twa guid consciences winna blaw ane anotheroot. — But he needna gang ilka day. He can gie ae day to the learnin', an' the neist to thinkin' aboot it amo' the sheep. An' ony day 'at ye want to keep him, ye can keep him; for it winna be as gien he gaed to the schuil."

Gibbie was delighted with the proposal.

"Only," said Robert, in final warning, "dinna ye lat them tak ye, Gibbie, an' score yer back again, my cratur; an' dinna ye answer naebody, whan they speir what ye're ca'd, anything mair nor *jist Gibbie*."

The boy laughed and nodded, and, as Janet said, the bairn's nick was as guid's the best man's word.

Now came a happy time for the two boys. Donal began at once to teach Gibbie Euclid and arithmetic. When they had had enough of that for a day, he read Scotch history to him; and when they had done what seemed their duty by that, then came the best of the feast — whatever tales or poetry Donal had laid his hands upon.

Somewhere about this time it was that he first got hold of a copy of the *Paradise Lost*. He found that he could not make much of it. But he found also that, as before with the ballads, when he read from it aloud to Gibbie, his mere listening presence sent back a spiritual echo that helped him to the meaning; and when neither of them understood it, the grand organ roll of it, losing nothing in the Scotch vowel-ing, delighted them both.

Once they were startled by seeing the gamekeeper enter the field. The moment he saw him, Gibbie laid himself flat on the ground, but ready to spring to his feet and run. The man, however, did not come near them.

From The Nineteenth Century.
THE RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT
EGYPTIANS.

"OH Egypt! Egypt! Of thy religion fables only will remain, which thy disciples will understand as little as they do thy religion. Words cut into stone will alone remain telling of thy pious deeds. The Scythian, or the dweller by the Indus, or some other barbarian will inhabit thy fair land."

Such was the prophecy of Hermes Trismegistus, too literally fulfilled concerning the religion of the nation which Herodotus considered to be "by far the best-instructed people with whom he was acquainted, since they, of all men, store up most for recollection" — the people who "of all men were most attentive to the worship of the gods," and "most scrupulous in matters of religion" — the people from whose pantheon he gladly acknowledges that "almost all the gods came into Greece." The crowning glory of the wisdom of King Solomon was that it "excelled the wisdom of Egypt."

Of their love of learning and reverence for religion we have abundant proof in their writings on the papyrus of the Nile and the "fine linen of Egypt;" and in the "words cut into stone" on the walls of temples, on the tombs of kings and queens, of priests and priestesses, of noble men and fair women. Every temple had its library attached. On the walls of the library at Dendera is sculptured a *catalogue raisonné* of manuscripts belonging to the temple. The exhortations to follow learning are unceasing: "Love letters as thy mother. I make its beauty to appear in thy face. It is a greater possession than all honors." *

And so we, descendants of the "barbarians," the thought of whose appearance on the banks of the Nile sent such a shiver to the heart of the cultured priest, are able to spell out the religion of the Egyptians; and, unsealing the lips of the dead, bid them speak for us their "sermons in stones."

The interest which attaches to the religion of ancient Egypt is due partly to the proof it gives that our Father — who is, as a Vedic hymn calls him, "the most fatherly of fathers" — fed the souls and spirits of his children when they "hungered and thirsted after righteousness" in the remotest ages of the world; and partly to the light it sheds upon the Mosaic con-

ception and idea of the Divine Being and man's relation to him.

On this account it may be well to bear in mind the extreme antiquity of the Egyptians and the state of their civilization during the servitude of the Israelites. A pyramid at Sakkárah, near Thebes, has a royal title on the inner door to the fourth king of the first dynasty. If this inscription be correct, then the pyramid was built from five to seven hundred years before the great pyramid of Cheops, and was two thousand years old in the time of Abraham. Of this pyramid we may say, as King Amenemha said of a palace he was building, "Made for eternity, time shrinks before it."

During the period of the slavery of the Israelites, Egypt was already in its decadence, and its religion had lost much of its original purity. We possess books of travels, moral treatises, letters, sacred hymns, and novels, some written before and some during this period. Moses was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and the influence of this learning is felt in the Pentateuch.

The dry climate and the sand of Egypt have preserved the monuments, the papyri, and the frescoes, which appear fresh as the day on which they were painted. M. Mariette describes his penetrating into one of the sealed sepulchral chambers at Memphis and finding, on the thin layer of sand which covered the floor, the footprints of the workmen who, thirty-seven hundred years before, had laid the Apis mummy in its sarcophagus and closed, as they believed, the door of perfect fitting stone forever.

We shall consider (1) the idea of God, (2) the effect of this idea upon the life of the people, (3) the conception of the future life.

I. The manifold forms of the Egyptian pantheon were nothing, says the late E. Deutsch,* but religious masks of the sublime doctrine of the unity of the Deity communicated to the initiated in the mysteries. "The gods of the pantheon were," says M. Pierrot, "only manifestations of the One Being in his various capacities." † M. Maspero ‡ and other scholars have arrived at the same conclusion.

The following hymn occurs on two papyri in the British Museum. It represents the thought prevalent in Egypt at

* Lit. Rem. p. 178.

† Dict. d'Arch. Egypt., art. "Religion." Paris, 1875.

‡ Hist. Anc. des Peuples de l'Orient, cap. i. Paris, 1876.

the time of the Exodus, and is the work of Enna, the well-known author of the "Romance of the Two Brothers" and other works. The hymn was translated some years ago by Maspero.* A translation has also been offered by Canon Cook in "Records of the Past"† I select portions which express the unity of the Godhead:—

Hail to thee, O Nile!

He causeth growth to fulfil all desires,
He never wearies of it.
He maketh his might a buckler.‡
He is not graven in marble §
As an image bearing the double crown.
He is not beheld :||
He hath neither ministrants nor offerings :
He is not adored in sanctuaries :
His abode is not known.
No shrine is found with painted figures (of
him).

There is no building that can contain him ! ¶
There is no counselor in thy heart ! **
Every eye is satisfied with him.††

Unknown is his name in heaven,
He does not manifest his forms !
Vain are all representations of him.

On this hymn Canon Cook makes the note, sufficiently remarkable as coming from the editor of the "Speaker's Commentary": "The whole of this passage is of extreme importance, showing that, apart from all objects of idolatrous worship, the old Egyptian recognized the existence of a supreme God, unknown and inconceivable; the true source of all power and goodness."

This one God is moreover the creator: "He has made the world with his hand, its waters, its atmosphere, its vegetation, all its flocks, and birds, and fish, and reptiles, and beasts of the field." ‡‡ "He made all the world contains, and hath given it light when there was as yet no sun." §§ "Glory to thee who hast begotten all that exists, who hast made man, and made the gods also, and all the beasts of the field. Thou makest men to live. Thou hast no being second to thee. Thou givest the breath of life. Thou art the light of this world." |||

* *Hymne au Nil.* Paris, 1868. Lauth offers a fine translation in "*Moses der Brüder*."

† Vol. iv., p. 105.

‡ Cf. Ps. xviii. 2.

§ Cf. Acts xvii. 29.

|| Cf. St. John i. 18.

¶¶ Cf. 1 Kings viii. 27.

** Cf. Isa. xi. 13, 14.

†† Cf. Ps. xvii. 15.

‡‡ Hymn to Osiris. Paris Stéle. Transl. by Chabas.

§§ *Mélanges Egypt.* i. 118, 119. Chabas.

||| Leeman, *Monuments du Musée des Pays-Bas*, ii. 3.

But although God be the creator, yet he is "self-created": "His commencement is from the beginning. He is the God who has existed from old time. There is no God without him. No mother bore him, no father hath begotten him. God-goddess created from himself. All gods came into existence when he began." *

Many of the hymns speak the mystery of his name: "Unknown is his name in heaven;" "Whose name is hidden from his creatures: in his name which is Amen" (*hidden, secret*).† Therefore the Egyptians never spoke the Unknown Name, but used a phrase which expressed the self-existence of the Eternal: "I am One Being, I am One." The expression is found in the "Ritual of the Dead," where Lepsius translates it: "Ich bin Tum, ein Wesen das ich eines bin," and he refers to the similarly constructed sentence: "I and my Father are one." ‡ E. Deutsch renders it, "I am He who I am." The original is Nuk-pu-Nuk. Plutarch § tells us of the veil which overhung the temple of Neith at Sais: "I am that was, and is, and is to be; and my veil no mortal hath yet drawn aside." The name Neith means "I came from myself." || In one of the magical texts there is a chapter entitled: "To open the Place of the Shrine of the Seat of Neith." "I am the seat of Neith, hidden in the hidden, concealed in the concealed, shut up in the shut up, unknown I am knowledge." ¶¶

At the town of Pilhom, God was worshipped under the name of "the Living God," which Brugsch considers to correspond with the meaning of the name Jehovah; and the serpent of brass, called *kerch* (the polished), was there regarded as the living symbol of God.**

These passages are sufficient to establish the fact stated in the letter of Iamblichus to Porphyry that the Egyptians "affirm that all things which exist were created, and that he who gave them being is their first Father and Creator." ††

The Egyptians felt that which we all

* Ibid. ii. 74. Chabas.

† The incommunicability of the name of the Divine Being was the truth at which Jacob arrived after the night's hard wrestling: "Why askest thou after my name?"

‡ ἐγώ καὶ οὐ πατέρως ΕΝ τούτῳ.

§ *De Isid. et Os.*, c. 9.

|| Athene is supposed to have had her origin in the Egyptian Neith. An inscription is said to exist in a temple of Athene: "I am all that was, and is, and shall be." Monier Williams, *Indian Wisdom*, p. 145, n.

¶¶ *Records of Past*, vi. 123.

** *Cong. of Orient. London*.

†† *De Myst.* i. 4.

feel, that no name can express all that God is. Nevertheless, they tried to realize God by taking some natural object which should in itself convey to their minds some feature in God's nature, so that from the well-known they might grope after if happily they might find the unknown. This became a necessity for the priests in the religious teaching of the people. Therefore in the sun they saw God manifested as the light of the world, in the river Nile they saw the likeness of him whom no temple can contain, whose form cannot be graven in marble, whose abode is unknown. The more fully they felt the infinite nature of God, the more would they seek in nature for symbols, and in flights of inspiration for names, to express the yearnings of their souls after God. Hence they called God Ptah when he speaks, and when by his word he becomes creator; they called him Thoth when he writes the sacred books, and "manifests truth and goodness;" they called him Osiris when he manifests all that is best and noblest in man's nature, and taking upon him the nature of man becomes the god-man. All the deities were regarded as manifestations of the one great Creator, the Uncreated, the Father of the universe.* This is expressed in the hymn: "Hail to thee! Lord of the lapse of time, king of gods! Thou of many names, of holy transformations, of mysterious forms."† This idea of one God expressed in many names is given by Aristotle: "God, though he be one, has many names, because he is called according to states into which he is continually entering anew."‡ The same idea is found in several passages of the Rig-Veda: "That which is one the wise call it in divers manners; they call it Agni, Yama, Indra, Varuna."§ "Wise poets make the beautiful-winged, though he be one, manifold by words."||

Nevertheless, as in Greece and in India, so also in ancient Egypt, the symbols became in the popular mind actual gods, and the people degenerated into gross idolatry. It is an instance of the descent from the worship of the invisible attributes of God. They "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible men, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things . . . and they changed the truth of God into a

lie; and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator."* This is unfortunately the aspect in which the Egyptian Pantheon has presented itself to mankind for many centuries.

After these appeared A crew, who under names of old renown, Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train, With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms

Rather than human.†

We possess the account of a brilliant effort made by Amenophis the Fourth (1500 B.C.) to abolish all worship except that of the sun. He assumed the name of "Glory of the solar disk," and changed the capital city so that the architecture might not suggest the popular polytheism. Lepsius explored the ruins of the new city, and found the walls decorated with peculiar floral designs, and with hymns to the sun. This reformation, however, lasted only for one generation, and then passed away.‡ We find the influence of this religious revolution on the stele of a hymn to Osiris (eighteenth dynasty), for wherever the name of the deity Amen occurs, it has been chiselled out; but it is restored under his successors.

A striking picture is given of King Pianchi Mer-Amon entering the temple of Ra, the sun. "He purified himself in the heart of the cool lake, washing his face in the stream of the heavenly waters in which Ra laves his face. Then he proceeded to the sandy height in Heliopolis, making a great sacrifice before the face of Ra at his rising, with cows, milk, gum, frankincense, and all precious woods delightful for scent. He went in procession to the temple of Ra . . . then the chief priest offered supplications to ward off calamity for the king, girded with the sacred vestments. He then purified him with incense and sprinkling, and brought to him garlands from the Temple of Obelisks.§ The king ascended the flight of steps to the great shrine to behold Ra in the Temple of Obelisks. The king stood by himself, the great one alone, he drew the bolt, he opened the folding doors, he saw his father Ra in the Temple of Obelisks. Then he closed the doors, and set sealing clay with the king's own signet, and enjoined the priests, say-

* *Hymne au Soleil dans le xv. chap. du Rituel, par Lefèvre.*

† Chabas, *Rev. Arch.*, O.S. xiv. 8a.

‡ *De Mundo*, c. vii. init.

§ R. V. i. 164, 46.

|| R. V. x. 114, 5.

* Rom. i. 23-25. See also Plutarch in *De Is. et Osir.*, c. lxxi.

† *Paradise Lost*, i. 476-483.

‡ Brugsch, *Histoire d'Egypte*, p. 118.

§ One of the obelisks which then stood before the porch still exists.

ing : 'I have set my seal; let no other king whatever enter therein.' Then he stood, and they prostrated themselves before his majesty."*

The conception of the unity of the God-head did not prevent the Egyptians from thinking of God as very near to them. He is their Father, and they "sons beloved of their Father." He is the "Giver of life;" "Toucher of the hearts, Searcher of the inward parts, is his name." "Every one glorifies thy goodness, mild is thy love towards us; thy tenderness surrounds our hearts; great is thy love in all the souls of men." One lamentation cries : "Let not thy face be turned away from us; the joy of our hearts is to contemplate thee. Chase all anguish from our hearts." "He wipes tears from off all faces." "Hail to thee, Ra, Lord of all truth : whose shrine is hidden; Lord of the gods : who listeneth to the poor in his distress : gentle of heart when we cry to thee. Deliverer of the timid man from the violent; judging the poor, the poor and the oppressed. Lord of mercy most loving : at whose coming men live ; at whose goodness gods and men rejoice. Sovereign of life, health, and strength."† "Speak nothing offensive of the great Creator, if the words are spoken in secret : the heart of man is no secret to him that made it. . . . He is present with thee though thou be alone."‡

As we might expect from so lofty a conception of God, their hearts broke forth into joyous hymns of praise : —

Hail to thee, say all creatures :
Salutation from every land :
To the height of heaven, to the breadth of the earth :
To the depths of the sea :
The gods adore thy majesty.
The spirits thou hast made exalt thee,
Rejoicing before the feet of their begetter.
They cry out welcome to thee :
Father of the father of all the gods :
Who raises the heavens, who fixes the earth.
Maker of beings, creator of existences,
Sovereign of life, health, and strength, chief
of the gods :
We worship thy spirit, who alone hast made
us :
We, whom thou hast made, thank thee, that
thou hast given us birth;
We give to thee praises for thy mercy towards
us.§

II. Such was the idea of God and his relation to man held by the ancient Egyp-

tians; and, as we might expect, it drew forth in them "lovely and pleasant lives."

The three cardinal requirements of Egyptian piety were love to God, love to virtue, love to man.* "I was a wise man upon earth," says an ancient Egyptian, "and I ever loved God." On one of the tombs at Thebes a king sums up his life : "I lived in truth, I fed my soul with justice. What I did to men was done in peace; and how I loved God, God and my heart well know." The Rosetta stone records of Ptolemy Epiphanes : "He was pious towards the gods, he ameliorated the life of man, he was full of generous piety, he showed forth with all his might his sentiments of humanity. He distributed justice to all like God himself." Thus was the modern king a worthy successor of the ancient.

Love of truth and justice was a distinguishing characteristic of the Egyptians. God is invoked : "Rock of Truth is thy name."† In an inscription at Sistrum a king addresses Hathor, goddess of truth : "I offer to thee the truth, O goddess ! for truth is thy work, and thou thyself art the truth."‡ Thoth is the god who "manifests truth and goodness." The high priest in every town, who was also the chief magistrate, wore round his neck a jewelled jewel, which bore on one side the image of Truth, and on the other sometimes the image of Justice sometimes of Light. When the accused was acquitted the judge held out the image for him to kiss.§ The image of Justice is represented with the eyes closed and without hands, to signify that the judge should never receive any bribe with his hands to "blind his eyes withal." So also, in the scene of the final judgment, Osiris wears round his neck the jewelled Justice and Truth, the heavenly pattern of the earthly copy, for justice and truth are eternal in the heavens. This jewel was adopted apparently by the Jewish high priest after the flight from Egypt. No English translation has been offered for the strange words Urim and Thummim, but the LXX. translated them "Truth and Light." Truthfulness was an essential part of the Egyptian moral code; and when, after death, the soul enters the Hall of the Two Truths, or Perfect Justice, it repeats the words learned upon earth : "O thou great God, Lord of truth ! I have known thee. I

* Records of Past, ii. 98.

† Ibid. ii. 131.

‡ Goodwin, Cambridge Essays.

§ Records of Past, ii. 133.

Keim, *Jesus v. Nazara*, ii. 157.

Brugsch, *Sai an Sinsin*. Berlin, 1851.

† Edwards, *One Thousand Miles up the Nile*, i. 191.

§ Chabas has an interesting paper on Egyptian justice in *Mélanges Egypt*, iii. 2 ff.

have known thy name. Lord of truth is thy name. I never told a lie at the tribunal of truth." *

The honor due to parents sprang naturally from the belief in God as "our Father which art in heaven." We constantly find inscriptions on the tombs such as the following: "I honored my father and my mother; I loved my brothers. I taught little children. I took care of orphans as though they had been my own children." † In letters of excellent advice addressed by an old man of one hundred and ten years of age to a young friend — which form the most ancient book in the world, dating 3000 B.C. — he says: "The obedience of a docile son is a blessing. God loves obedience. Disobedience is hated by God. The obedience of a son maketh glad the heart of his father. . . . A son teachable in God's service will be happy in consequence of his obedience, he will grow to be old, he will find favor." ‡ This is the earliest appearance of the "first commandment with promise" (Eph. vi. 2), the obedience to God and man which was the "essence of Hebraism."

The moral code of the Egyptians was exceedingly elaborate. It consisted of forty-two commandments or heads under which all sins might be classed. This code was the ideal placed before men on earth; it was the standard of perfection according to which they would be judged in heaven. Some of them are of local interest only, but most belong to the eternal laws of right and wrong written on the tables of the heart. Men were taught from childhood, as children are nowadays taught their catechism, that they must appear in the presence of the Divine Judge, and say: "I have not privily done evil to my neighbors. I have not afflicted any, nor caused any to weep. I have not told lies. § I have not done any wicked thing. I have not done what is hateful to the gods. I have not calumniated the slave to his master. I have not been idle. || I have

not stolen. I have not committed adultery. I have not committed murder." And so on.

But their commandments were positive as well as negative. On the tombs we find the common formula: "I have given bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, shelter to the stranger." * In the lamentation at funerals, the mourners see the deceased entering the presence of the Divine Judge, and they chant the words: "There is no fault in him. No accuser riseth up against him. In the truth he liveth, with the truth he nourisheth himself. The gods are satisfied with all that he hath done. . . . He succored the afflicted, he gave bread to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, he sheltered the outcast, his doors were open to the stranger, he was a father to the fatherless." † This was the principle of the final judgment announced by the Son of Man to whom "all judgment is committed," some four thousand years afterwards among the hills of Palestine.

This tenderness for suffering humanity is characteristic of the nation. Gratefully does a man acknowledge in his autobiography (4000 B.C.): "Wandering I wandered and was hungry, bread was set before me: I fled from the land naked, there was given me fine linen." ‡ It is a glory to a man that "the poor shall make their moan at the door of his tomb." An inscription on a tomb at Beni-Hassan, written about 2500 B.C., reads: "I have not oppressed any widow. No prisoner languished in my days. No one died of hunger. When there were years of famine I had my fields ploughed. I gave food to the inhabitants, so that there was no hungry person. I gave the widow equal portions with the married. I did not prefer the rich to the poor." § On a wall of the temple of Karnak there is sculptured the earliest known extradition treaty. It is between Rameses the Second and a Khetan prince. The last clause provides that political fugitives are to be sent back, with the following humane provision for their personal safety: "Whoever shall be

* Ritual.

† *Die ägyptische Gräberwelt.* Von H. Brugsch. Leipzig, 1868.

‡ Goodwin, Cambridge Essays, 1868.

§ The ninth commandment of the Jewish decalogue is a particular form of this great law.

|| They had a contempt for idleness. "God loathes idle hands" (*Hymne au Nil*). "Ra, the giver of food, destroys all place for idleness" (Ritual, xv. 20). In one of the "Letters" we read: "Why is thy heart volatile as the chaff before the wind? Give thy heart to something worthy of a man's doing. Give not thy heart to pleasure. Idleness is unprofitable. It is of no service to a man in the day of account. His work is found wanting when weighed in the balance. Such is the man whose heart is not in his business, whose eye scorns it," etc. — Goodwin, Essays.

* Brugsch gives a series of interesting inscriptions in *Die ägypt. Gräberwelt*.

† Henricus Brugsch, *Saï an Sisini, sive Liber Metempsychosis veterum Ägypt.* Berlin, 1851. *Rev. Arch.* xiv. anné, p. 194.

‡ Chabas, *Les Papyrus Hibrisques de Berlin, révélés d'il y a quatre mille ans.* 1863.

§ H. Brugsch, *Die ägypt. Gräberwelt.* This reference to famine is interesting. During the early dynasties, the officer in charge of the public granaries is entitled "master of the house of *saf*," food. The name given to Joseph signifies "Food of the living;" Zaphnath-paanch.

delivered up, himself, his wives, his children, let him not be smitten to the death ; moreover, let him not suffer in the eyes, in the mouth, in the feet ; moreover, let not any crime be set up against him." This treaty was engraven for the Khetan prince on a silver tablet. In a volume of maxims we read : "Maltreat not an inferior. Let your wife find in you her protector, maltreat her not. Save not thine own life at the cost of another." On the tomb of a man at El-Kalb (4000 B.C.) it is recorded that he "never left home with anger in his heart."*

III. It was the opinion of Herodotus that the "Egyptians were the first people who affirmed the immortality of the soul."† No satisfactory explanation has been given of the silence of the Pentateuch on the immortality of the soul. No definite expression of the belief appears in the Hebrew Scriptures until the time of the Babylonish captivity, when the Jews came into contact with the Persians, who held it as a fixed article of faith. Certain it is that no nation kept more prominently before their minds the reality of the other world and the final judgment than did the ancient Egyptians. Birth into this world they called death into the land of darkness, death they spoke of as birth into the manifestation of light.‡

There are a large number of papyri found in the tombs laid beside and upon the mummy, which are known as the "Book or Ritual of the Dead." The most complete of these books, the Turin papyrus, consists of one hundred and sixty-five chapters, each with a title of its contents, and with rubrics in red ink explanatory of its use; the whole being illustrated by descriptive vignettes. Generally we find only a few chapters, either in papyrus leaves or cut into the hard black granite or the pure alabaster sarcophagus. There is an unknown variety of texts, apparently expressing the doctrine prevailing at the time in that part of Egypt where it was written. The oldest are the most valuable, as they are the purer, and show the various additions which have been made in the way of paraphrase and explanation, and which have become in process of time incorporated as part of the text. Some chapters of the book declare that they were written by God himself, and that they reveal his will and the divine

mysteries to man. One chapter, the sixtieth-fourth, states that it was written by the "finger of the god Thoth," the "manifestor of truth and goodness;" * therefore the book was regarded as hermetic or inspired. It says of itself : "There is no book like it; man hath not spoken it, neither hath ear heard it."†

The "Book of the Dead" describes the passage of the deceased through the other world into the presence of the Eternal Judge, Osiris.

The story of Osiris is one of great interest. He is said to have been a divine being, who in ancient times descended to earth and took upon him the form and nature of man. A being perfectly good, he ameliorated mankind by persuasion and by good deeds. But at length he was killed by Typhon the Evil One. His wife Isis went through the world in search of him, asking the little children if they had seen her lord. He was raised to life again; and he made his son Horus his avenger on the Evil One. It is this sacrifice which Osiris had once accomplished in behalf of man on earth, which makes him the protector of man in the other world, the invisible place. The god-man becomes not only the guide of the deceased through the other world; he also clothes him with his own divine nature, so that throughout the books the deceased is described as Osiris *M.* or *N.*, for he has put on, and become identified with, Osiris; and he sits on the throne of justice, the Judge Eternal. Finally he is represented as the mediator between God and man, and is thus at once the representative man and the savior of mankind.‡

In one of the hymns to Osiris, his praise is sung as he walks the heaven in holiness and overthrows the impure upon earth. He judges the world according to his will; then his name becomes hallowed, his immutable laws are respected, the world is at

* Champollion found a doorway in the Rameseum at Thebes adorned with figures of Thoth as god of letters, and Suf with the title Lady President of the Hall of Books. *Lettres Egypt.* xiv. Paris, 1868.

† This resembles Lao-tse's description of the law: "You look and you see it not, it is colorless; you listen and you hear it not, it is voiceless; you desire to handle it, you touch it not, it is formless." — Stanislaus Julien, Lao-tse-King.

‡ Aug. Mariette Bey, *Notice des Monum. à Boulaq*, 1872, pp. 105 sq. I may notice here that Osiris, Isis, and Horus form one of those triads which are found in most great theologies : "Le point de départ de la mythologie égyptienne est une triade." (Champollion, *Lettres*, xi.) Isis the mother with Horus the child in her arms — the merciful who would save the worshipper from Osiris the stern judge — became as popular a worship in Egypt in the time of Augustus, as that of the Virgin and Child in Italy and Spain to-day. Juvenal mentions that the painters of Rome almost earned a livelihood by painting the goddess Isis.

* Deutsch, Lit. Rem., p. 179.

† ii. 123.

‡ The dying words of Edward the Confessor were the "hope that he was passing from the land of the dead into the land of the living."

rest, evil flies away, there is peace and plenty upon the earth, justice is established, and iniquity purged away.

The national hymn of Egypt was the *Maneros*, which was the passionate cry of Isis to Osiris.*

The soul on entering the realms of the dead addresses the Divine Being: "O thou Hidden One! Hidden where thou hast the praises of all in Hades (*Amenti*), who livest in power, covered with a precious veil — in purity!"† Then he prays for admission. Choirs of glorified spirits support the prayer. The priest on earth speaks in his turn, and implores the divine mercy. Then Osiris encourages the deceased to speak to his Father, and enter fearlessly into Amenti. Nevertheless, before the soul can enter, he must be purified, "cleansed from all stain of evil which is in his heart." Then and then only may he pass through the darkness, and be "manifested into light," and hear the voice of welcome: "Come, come in peace"‡. But the Egyptians felt that no man could become pure enough to enter into the presence of the All-Pure, and therefore they described the soul as putting on Osiris. Under the shelter of that divine vesture the "deceased was protected by the mystery of the Name from the ills which afflicted the dead."§ The soul then enters, and is amazed at the glory of God which he now sees for the first time. He chants a hymn of praise, and passes on his way.

Space will not permit me to follow the soul on its passage. The Turin papyrus has been translated by Dr. Birch in Bunsen's "Egypt." "One chapter is entitled: 'Of Escaping out of the Folds of the Great Serpent,'" and tells how the deceased defies, and in the strength of Osiris escapes, the Evil One. A curious series of chapters follows, describing the "Reconstruction of the Deceased," or the new and glorified body which is given him. Several chapters relate to the "Protection of the Soul." By virtue of repeating one of these the soul "goes forth as the day. His soul is not detained in corruption (*Karneker*)," a passage which is equivalent to the Hebrew verse: "Thou wilt not abandon my soul in

Sheol, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption."* A parallel passage occurs in a later chapter (155), "Hail, O Father Osiris! Thou dost not corrupt, thou dost not turn to worms. Thou dost not decay. . . . I am! I am! I grow! I grow! I wake in peace. I am not corrupted."

One of the most interesting chapters (125) is entitled: "Going into the Hall of the Two Truths, and Separating a Person from his Sins when he has been made to see the Faces of the Gods." Several copies of this chapter are exhibited on the stairs leading from the lower to the upper Egyptian rooms of the British Museum. The vignettes explain the chapter. At the entrance to that Hall of Justice the deceased is received by the god of truth. He finds himself in the presence of forty-two assessors, or avenging deities, corresponding to the forty-two commandments. Before each of these he kneels in turn, and confesses: "I have not committed murder, theft, falsehood," etc. Then he pronounces the formula of the final judgment: "I have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, clothed the naked, sheltered the outcast, and been a father to the fatherless." He is then placed in one scale of a balance; in the other scale is placed the eyeless and handless image of Justice. This is the supreme moment in the soul's existence. In the Turin papyrus the scene is painted with a minuteness of detail suited to its importance: the guardian angel watches the scale which holds the soul; Horus watches the weight; Anubis, guardian of the dead, watches the image of Justice; while Thoth, stile in hand, records the result on a tablet.

The soul is then conducted by Thoth bearing the tablet into an inner chamber, where Osiris is seated. Osiris pronounces judgment; and according as the soul which has been weighed in the balance is found true or found wanting, it passes to the realms of bliss or to the regions of purifying fires.

In this trial scene the deities are sometimes depicted interceding as mediators, and offering sacrifices on behalf of the soul. There is a tablet in the British Museum in which the deceased is shown in the act of placing the gods themselves on the altar as his sin-offering, and pleading their merits.†

Joyfully does the "Book of Respirations," or "Book of the Breath of Life,"

* Brugsch, *Die Adonisklage*, p. 24.
† Henr. Brugsch, *Sai an Sisini, sive Liber Mētempsychosis veterum Ægypti*. Berlin, 1851.

‡ For the Christian parallel see Newman's "Dream of Gerontius."

§ Dr. Birch in *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache*, Ap. 1869, p. 51. It is to this that Jamblichus refers when he says that the "Egyptians affirm the way to heaven is the name of God which penetrates through all the world" (*De Myst.* viii. 5).

* Ps. xvi. 10.

† Sharpe, *Egypt. Myth. and Egypt. Christianity*.

salute the soul : "Come, Osiris *N.*! Thou dost enter the hall of the two goddesses of truth ! Thou art purified from all sin, from all crime. Hail, Osiris *N.*! Thou being very pure dost enter the lower heaven. The two goddesses of justice have purified thee in the great hall. . . . Thou art justified forever and ever !" "O ye gods who dwell in the lower heaven, hearken unto the voice of Osiris *N.* He is near unto you. There is no fault in him. . . . He liveth in the truth, he nourisheth himself with truth. The gods are satisfied with what he hath done. Let him live ! Let his soul live !"

That which strikes one most in the one hundred and twenty-fifth chapter is the profound insight that every work shall be brought into judgment, and every secret thing whether it be good or evil. It is the voice of conscience which accuses or excuses in that solemn hour, for no accuser appears in the hall ; the man's whole life is seen by himself in its true light, all is "laid bare before Him with whom we have to do ;" perfect justice is meted to every man, and yet at the last moment "mercy seasons justice," for the judge is Osiris the god-man.

The rubric that follows this chapter states that it was to be repeated on earth with great solemnity. The worshipper must be "clad in pure linen, and shod with white sandals, and anointed with fragrant oil, because he is received into the service of Osiris and is to be dressed in pure fine linen forever." This reminds us of the Apocalyptic vision : "To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

Constantly did the Egyptian look forward to the day of final judgment. It was the most important day of his existence ; he called it, with significant brevity, "the day" — *dies illa* — the day in which he hoped to be "justified," or, as he expressed it, "found true in the balance." It was the supreme moment of escape from the death and darkness of this world into the life and light of the other world : then, not till then, should he "behold the face of God." Therefore death had for him no terror ; it was a law, not a punishment ; it was a release from the company of the fellow-spirits imprisoned in the body. Sometimes a perfect representation of a mummy was seated at the Egyptian banquets ; sometimes it was carried round to

each guest in turn : "Gaze here, drink and be merry, for when you die such shall you become."* The object of this custom was to teach men "to love one another, and to avoid those evils which tend to make them consider life too long when in reality it is too short."† In a festal dirge King Antuf (eleventh dynasty) sang : "The gods who were aforetime rest in their tombs ; the mummies of the saints are enwrapped in their tombs. They who build houses, and they who have no houses, behold what becomes of them. . . . No man returns thence. Who tells of their sayings ? who tells of their doings ? who encourages our hearts ? Ye go to the place whence none return. . . . Feast in tranquillity, seeing that there is no one who carries away his goods with him. Yea, behold, none who goes thither comes back again."‡ There is a sadness, a profound melancholy, in the "death in life" of the ancient Egyptians, which perhaps justifies the curious remark of Apuleius : "The gods of Egypt rejoice in lamentations, the gods of Greece in dances."

The Egyptian had a reverence for his body — the casket in which the precious jewel of the soul "lodged as in an inn" for so many years — and so he built sumptuous tombs, and adorned them with frescoes and inscriptions, and called them his "everlasting home."§ Saneha, in his autobiography (2000 B.C.), says : "I built myself a tomb of stone. His Majesty chose the site. The chief painter designed it, the sculptors carved it. . . . All the decorations were of hewn stone. . . . My image was carved upon the portal of pure gold. His Majesty caused it to be done. No other was like unto it."

These tombs were often sadly desecrated. We read, for instance, of a commission appointed by Rameses the Ninth to inspect the tombs of the "royal ancestors" at Thebes. Their report has been translated by M. Chabas. It states that some of the royal mummies were found lying in the dust ; their gold and silver ornaments and the treasures had been stolen. It also mentions a tomb "broken into from the back, at the place where the stela is placed before the monument, and having the statue of the king upon the front of the stela with his hound Bahuka between his legs. Verified this day, and found intact."¶

* *Sai an Sinsin.* Records of the Past, iv. 121.

† Revel. xix. 8.

‡ "Mors lex non pana est." — Cicero.

* Herod. ii. 78. Lucian, Essay on Grief.

† Plutarch, *De Is.* 15.

‡ Records of the Past, iv. 118.

§ ἀδίοντος οἰκους προσαγορεύοντας. — Diodor. i. 31.

¶ Goodwin's translation in Records, vi. 133.

¶ *Mélanges Egypt., 3me série,* 1870.

Such is the report of three thousand years ago. Some years ago M. Marietta discovered the mummies of the tomb of this very king, and the broken stela bearing upon its face a full-length bas-relief of the king with the dog Bahuka between his legs, his name engraved upon his back.* It was often difficult to find the tomb in the necropolis. In the "Tale of Setnau" we read: "He proceeded to the necropolis of Coptos with the priests of Isis and with the high priests of Isis. They spent three days and three nights in searching all the tombs, and in examining the tablets of hieroglyphic writing, and reading the letters engraved upon them, without discovering the burial-places of Ahura and her son Merhu."†

Before the body was laid in the tomb it was embalmed by the "physicians of Egypt." It is by no means certain why the body was embalmed and preserved with so much care. Sir G. Wilkinson thinks that it intimated a belief in its resuscitation, but there is no proof in their writings of this belief.‡ The most probable solution is the idea that as the soul was purified in the other world so the body should be purified and prevented from putrefying in this world. So carefully are the mummies preserved that if a piece of mummy be macerated in warm water, it will recover the natural appearance of flesh, and if it be then exposed to the action of the air it will putrefy.§

On the way to the tomb the funeral procession halted on the shore of the sacred lake of its *nome* or department; and the scene of the Hall of the Two Truths was acted with an awe-inspiring solemnity. Forty-two judges stood to hear if any one on earth accused the dead as his own conscience was then accusing him in the hidden world. If an accusation was made and substantiated, the sentence of exclusion from burial was pronounced, even if the dead were the Pharaoh himself.

Such is a general outline of some few of the characteristics of the religion of the ancient Egyptians. It opens up a considerable number of questions of extreme interest touching its influence on the earlier religion of Israel from the time when

Abraham "came near to enter into Egypt," during the period when "Israel abode in Egypt," first as guests then as slaves, until they were led forth by the hand of Moses, the fair child brought up in the house of Pharaoh, the man "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." In later ages Egypt still stood forth as the source of wisdom and learning whence flowed the culture of Greece; and still later the highest culture and most brilliant thought of the Christian Church came from the schools of Alexandria, the new capital of the old country.*

The Egyptian religion, unaltered by the Persians, the Ptolemies, or the Romans, was of all ancient religions the most obstinate in its resistance to Christianity. The priests of the Temple of Osiris at Philæ—"he who sleeps at Philæ"—opposed the edict of Theodosius in A.D. 379; and that so successfully that we find from the votive tablets they were in possession so late as 453 A.D. At length, however, the day came when the chants in honor of the resurrection of Osiris gave way to chants in honor of the risen Christ; and the great temple was dedicated to the martyr St. Stephen. "This good work," says a Greek inscription, "was done by the God-beloved Abbot Theodore." But the day of vengeance came, and the Christian in his turn was driven forth by the triumphant Moslem, and the Christian Church is now extinct in Nubia.

In the claim which Egypt has upon our affections let us never forget that it welcomed as guest the patriarch to whom three great religions of the world, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, trace back their spiritual origin, "our forefather Abraham;" and that it was the home in which the infant Saviour of the world, lying in his mother's arms, found a refuge, and the highest significance was given to the words: "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

JOHN NEWENHAM HOARE.

* *Trans. Bib. Arch. Soc.* IV., i. 172.

† Records, iv. 147.

‡ Pritchard, E. Myth. 198.

§ Pettigrew, Hist. of Egyptian Mummies.

* Some curious details of Egyptian ritual are still extant in the various Churches of Christendom, such as the ring which the Egyptian put on his wife's finger in token that he entrusted her with his property; the feast of candles at Sais, which survives in Candlemas; the keys of St. Peter find their counterpart in the high priest of Thebes, who bore the title, "keeper of the two doors of heaven."

THE BRIDE'S PASS.

THE BRIDE'S PASS.

BY SARAH TYTLER,

AUTHOR OF

"WHAT SHE CAME THROUGH," "LADY BELL," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE MANSE OF FEARNAVOIL, WITH THE
MINISTER AND THE MINISTER'S WIFE.

FEARNAVOIL was a wide Highland parish boasting much romantic scenery and great opportunities for sport. It was thus liable to attract to itself, in spite of its remoteness, fifteen years ago, constantly increasing swarms of visitors in summer and autumn, English and American tourists, aristocratic, cockney, Manchester, and Birmingham sportsmen.

Fearnavoil went on its way a little disdainful of outsiders. It had its own statistics, its own standards, its own magnates, and what did it care for the great world? True, that world undeniably brought grist to the Fearnavoil mill every time it intruded into the domain of a branch of the renowned Siol Ciunn, or race of Conn, or Clan Macdonald. But the clan preserved its self-respect by persistently regarding the world in general as an alien and intruder that had no particular business in Fearnavoil.

The kirk and manse of Fearnavoil, with a small adjoining hamlet — which was only in proportion to the scattered population of the parish as a small settlement of aborigines to the numerous tribes scattered broadcast over the wilderness — were situated close to the mouth of what was known by legend and traditional name as the Bride's Pass.

Had it not been for those minor conical hills which so often nestle at the foot and break the full view of the mountains; the manse windows would have had a glorious view as far as its windings would allow, down the steep, narrow pass, at its base waving with natural wood — oak, birch, and pine, only cleared to fill the reigning laird of Drumchat's purse once in twenty years, and in winter sounding with the hoarse roar of the Fearn River. As it was, the occupants of the manse merely commanded within doors or from the garden the rough shoulder of this intruding "shelty" of a hill, which, as a mere spur of its ancestral mountain, had not even a name, while the mighty creature which in some later throe had given it birth, reared its huge crest a thousand feet above its puny progeny — not that the little hill would not have been a very respectable approach to a mountain in a tame, flat country.

Just the jagged pinnacles of the crest of the mountain, together with another toppling crest on the opposite side of the pass a mile farther down, could be distinguished from the manse; and those two glimpses of peaks were prized and clung to with a pride and fondness, an almost superstitious regard, which only those who have dwelt among the mountains and know how they affect the mountaineers can understand.

"Is that all you can see?" strangers would exclaim in disappointment, when brought to one of the manse windows or to the garden seat to peer up at the bald crowns of the giants' heads. "Why, I don't think those morsels up in the sky are worth the counting."

But it was the ignorance of the speaker that expressed itself in these words. Not one of the family or the servants — unless it were Mrs. Macdonald and Mrs. Macdonald's Jenny, who argued truly that those remote sentinels kept back the sun's rays, made the morning later and the evening earlier — would not have freely given up every other element in the prospect, the inlying fields that belonged to the minister's glebe, the brown and green thatched roofs of the hamlet, the wide heathery slope which completed the catalogue, sooner than yield these parings from the summits of Benvoil or the Tuaidh. For one thing, who would ever have known what the coming weather was to be if he or she had not caught a suggestion that the morning mists were rolling lightly away, or descending heavily like an old seer's mantle on Benvoil? And there were some people in the manse who would hardly have known the evening star, — to whom it would not have been the same fair, pale star, if they had not seen it rise as they had been accustomed to see it, and hang for a space — like a gleaming pearl rather than a glittering diamond — the one precious jewel over the dark brow of the Tuaidh.

The manse, though of course much less commodious as a building, was decidedly of a more pleasing exterior than the adjoining kirk, without the smallest disrespect intended to the latter beyond what lay in the rooted Scotch conviction that, since the days of the Jewish temple, there was nothing sacred in stone walls, and that no priest's consecration could confer greater holiness than might be imparted by the prayer of the head of the house on the family hearth. The church was a better sort of barn, with a wen of a belfry, in place of a tower, breaking its mean, mo-

notorious lines. The manse would have been a very fair dwelling for a moderately endowed laird. It had an air of old-fashioned respectability and comfort, and was not without a modified domestic picturesqueness and dignity. It was a two-storied white house, long enough and broad enough to imply no absence of room, even when the minister entertained half-a-dozen guests in the shooting-season. The roof was of a soft grey lichen-tinted stone, not hard, clean, blue slate. On the sheltered side of the house was a quaint enough glass porch, which Mrs. Macdonald used as a greenhouse in summer, though she did not share the minister's love of flowers.

The old overgrown garden, with an upper terrace for flower-beds and shrubs, and a lower terrace for such fruit and vegetables as did not disdain the climate and soil of Fearnavoil, stretched along by the Fearn River, which formed its boundary on one side — not an unmixed advantage, since in seasons of high flood the water rose and overflowed the banks so far as to do considerable damage to the minister's bedding-out plants and crops, even to his shrubs and bushes. But after all the loss was temporary. High floods did not occur every year, and not often in summer or early autumn. The geraniums, potatoes, and carrots, were not the worse next year for the wreck wrought twelve months before ; the hollies and laurels, honeysuckles, thorns and sweet-briars, gooseberry and black-currant bushes, were never permanently injured by their submerging, but shook out their greenery afresh, and blossomed and bore berries, if possible, more luxuriantly than before.

The glebe offices, which in that generation served also as the offices for the adjoining lands of Craigdbhu, and included quarters for a couple of cows, several pairs of plough-horses, the minister's one carriage and riding horse, pigs and poultry, a hay and a peat stack, were at the opposite side of the house, only divided from it by a lane, or "loaning," which ran into the irregular street of a dozen houses, forming the hamlet of Fearnavoil, that had gathered at the skirts of the kirk and manse. For the straight-lined kirk and green hill-ocky kirkyard, stuck thick with mossy stones, upright or just out of the perpendicular, like almonds in a hedgehog cake, lay a little beyond the manse, in a final bend of the Fearn before it entered the Bride's Pass.

Every house of the hamlet had its rich brown peat-stack against its gable, though

it no longer possessed — thanks to the patient efforts of the minister — the primitive abomination of a pea-green "jaw hole" and a rotting refuse-heap placed in candid straightforwardness right before the only door. Over those squat, bulging-out, weather-stained little houses, olive-tinted like the heather when not in bloom — one or two of them still retaining the solitary decayed wooden chimney in the middle of the thatched roof, which was all that was required for the exigencies of the fire in the centre of the floor of the family room — there constantly hung or floated heavily clouds of white smoke that looked blue against a grey background. These clouds were full of the strong and subtle reek of peat, which once formed as distinctive an aroma of the Highlands as did the spicy fragrance of the gale or bog myrtle.

The manse had no other pleasure-grounds than its garden ; but where was the need of them when a walk of a few minutes on either side led, in the first instance to the opening into the magnificent mountain pass, and in the second to a wild heathery slope stretching to the verge of the horizon ? No doubt there was one of General Wade's wonderful high roads crossing this slope midway, and both the high road and the adjoining pass had become liable at certain seasons to be traversed and alighted on by flocks of restless, inquisitive strangers. Still both slope and glen were for the most part as quiet and secluded, and far more primitive, than any nook of a shrubbery or dell of a park. What lack of individual freedom could exist in Fearnavoil, where all or nearly all was free to the whole world of strangers as well as of natives ? There was yet room in this corner of the Scotch wilderness — miniature wilderness though it was, contrasted with the majestic ranches, vast prairies, and endless bush-land of countries beyond the Atlantic and the Pacific — solitude and repose were in the very air. Defiles within the defile, corries and thickets, rocks and fallen trees in the pass, and the great heathery brae itself on the other side of the hamlet, afforded an endless variety of paths and resting-places where all might wander or sit at will who wished to enjoy God's world with none to make them afraid, none to call them back, and few to spy on their privacy.

It was hardly likely that the minister, or any one man, however well endowed, could command pleasure-grounds owning a tithe of the beauty, nor to say the grandeur, of that nature which was open to mankind at large in Fearnavoil. For that matter, it

was known that Lord Moydart and his family, who were the great ones of the earth in that locality, cared little, when they came down in August, for their park or their gardens at Castle Moydart. They preferred to roam upon the mountains and in the glens, and make them their summer drawing-room, though it could be shared at a respectful distance by gillies and shepherds, old crones gathering sticks or herbs, barefooted boys and girls trudging long miles to school, black-faced sheep and long-horned cattle feeding on the carpet beneath their feet, crows and corbies soaring in the blue vault above their heads.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the principal man in the parish was the priest in his own person, since Lord Moydart belonged to another parish, while the Laird of Drumchatt, fifteen years ago, happened to be a young man, the minister's kinsman, and naturally under his influence. A rival might have existed in the shape of the minister of an opposing sect — and fifteen years ago party cries in Scotland were still louder than they are to-day — but it so chanced that no other church, save that by law established, had much footing in that particular parish.

Farquhar Macdonald, the laird of the farm of Craigdbhu, as well as the minister of Fearnavoil, was a good man in every sense. Save when he was completing the studies begun at the parish school, and ended at the nearest university, he had dwelt from youth to middle age in the parish. He was well known to every man, woman, and child in the wide, sparsely-peopled district; and his gifts and graces, that is, his unblemished character and kindly disposition, and his call to the ministry in the reverent godliness which had formed part of the idiosyncrasy of the boy no less than of the man, were not in vain. He was personally beloved.

But though Mr. Macdonald was also a man of fair parts intellectually, and could preach a sermon distinguished alike by devotion, simplicity, and good sense, he could not cope with difficulties he had never experienced, or rise to heights that were beyond the level of his mental and spiritual constitution. And there were, those even among his attached flock who, while they admitted that the minister held the "fundamentals," could have wished that his words were more rousing, that he would introduce more stirring effects into his services, even that he would roundly attack rather than meekly bear with the critics' offences.

If the minister had so acted, his censors

would have cheerfully looked over other faults — mild, like the man — which they were tempted to find in his walk and conversation. These were his love of farming and gardening; his addiction, when at leisure, to the contemplative sport of angling; and the darker whisper which accused him not merely of playing a game at draughts or backgammon in an odd half-hour, but of the far graver delinquency of keeping playing-cards, "the devil's books," in his house, and of joining with his guests in a rubber at whist in the desecrated manse drawing-room, as well as in the drawing-rooms of neighboring lairds and visitors.

After all, those were not huge enormities by way of recreation; but the more rigid and scrupulous of Mr. Macdonald's parishioners, who took their own amusements of a still more dubious description at cattle-trysts and neighborly gatherings, had a notion that a proper minister ought to be too busy, not to say too austere, for recreation of any kind.

Among these objectors, there were men and women who declared that if Mrs. Macdonald had been the minister — supposing the apostle Paul had not forbidden women to teach and preach, she would have carried the war with a redder hand into the enemy's country. She would have exhorted, appealed, denounced, implored, till the barn kirk rang again.

Farquhar Macdonald was a tall, slightly gaunt man, with a stoop in his figure, and a hollowness in his healthily enough colored cheeks, but showing little grey in his soft brown hair. Perhaps the most notable feature in his face was his long, slightly sleepy-looking but not unpenetrating eyes — brown, like his hair. He was to be seen on weekdays in a suit of priest's grey — a compromise between a minister's black and a laird's tweed suit.

Mrs. Macdonald had been a portionless lass of long pedigree, whom Farquhar Macdonald had freely chosen and married for love, and with whom he dwelt in amity, though there were many points of difference between them. She possessed in a marked degree the Celtic temperament, with its elements of gain and loss, its susceptibility and passion, its variableness, its complexity, which drew her in different directions while she was not consciously guilty of hypocrisy.

Mrs. Macdonald was an inconsistent woman without knowing it. She never found a sermon too long, she would have added indefinitely, had it been in her power, to days of fasting and prayer, and diets of

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public worship, when sermon upon sermon should be preached in succession, and "tent addresses" given into the bargain. She could not imagine a secular engagement which might interfere with her attendance at a religious meeting. She trudged staunchly through mud and mire, since the minister's horse was often inevitably bespoken for his own use in another quarter, to exhort or solace a sinner open to such treatment. Nay, to do her justice, in these circumstances she was not mean; she would cheerfully convey to the sinner such temporal assistance and pleasant cates as Mrs. Macdonald herself could not well spare, while her client might feel tempted to claim them as no more than his or her due in the transaction.

But she would also resent and refuse to see the offer of the hand of the distiller's or cattle-dealer's wife when Mrs. Macdonald met her in the very kirkyard path. She would only keep up a kind of condescending professional intercourse with the households of her husband's brother clergymen, since these had brought to the neighboring parish manses womankind drawn from less distinguished sources than her own. She would not associate, or allow her daughter, Unah,* to associate familiarly, with any family in rank below that of a laird, unless, indeed, the family happened to be possessed of such wealth as to have hastened by a generation or two the process of refinement, and bought an entrance betimes into privileged circles.

The minister's personal habits were simple, and he did what he could to keep those of his household simple also. Nevertheless, Mrs. Macdonald maintained a style of living at the manse which, while it stopped short of entangling her husband in debt, hampered his finances, helped to send his sons abroad, without one of them waiting to succeed to the paternal farm, or to seek the promotion of being appointed his father's helper and successor, and afforded no possibility of any save a slender provision being made for the only daughter of the house.

But the apparent want of care for Unah's future was quite compatible with Mrs. Macdonald's entertaining for her daughter the most ambitious views which could be held with any show of reason in that part of the country. It was universally believed that the minister of Fearnavoil's wife did not destine Unah for a zealous and saintly young probationer not yet ordained, and looking to the field of missions as his true

sphere, but for her husband's cousin twice removed, Donald Macdonald, the laird of Drumchatt. And he was not only a sickly young fellow, the last of a short-lived race, he was also — always save in his lairdship, and the advantage it gave him as a suitor for Unah — a man not particularly to Mrs. Macdonald's mind, with his opinions and habits more conformed to the minister's standard.

Mrs. Macdonald's extravagance with a method in it, necessitated a sharp, vigilant economy in all household details apart from social pretensions. This closefistedness impaired her worldly popularity. The shopkeeper of the store at the Ford, the nearest village — deserving the name — to Fearnavoil, with all his Highland politeness and natural feeling for the minister and Craigdbhu, did not court her custom. Girls whom the minister had baptized and catechized, and whom Mrs. Macdonald herself had taught diligently in her Sabbath-school class, did not care to enter her service. Still, she was highly esteemed as an indefatigable district visitor and tract-distributor, a woman who could deliver a cottage address or prayer as ably or "powerfully," according to the Scotch phrase, as a man and a minister — for that matter, with far more natural eloquence than her husband possessed.

Mrs. Macdonald was a woman of some native elegance of person and mind. At fifty she was as slender, if a little more angular in figure, as she had been at twenty. She was a woman who wore a shawl well, while her gown of the simplest and plainest description always suited her, and looked the dress of a lady. In truth she was a good many stages beyond that type of the religious mind which finds a vent for its lurking worldliness either in fine clothes or in luxurious fare. She had always been a reader and thinker in her way, and had kept herself up with the mental progress of the day through book-boxes and reading-clubs, even while she preserved for herself, no less than for Unah, as rigid a system of prohibition and condemnation in her studies as ever was established by pope or presbyter.

Mrs. Macdonald had bright dark eyes still, and aquiline features getting stronger with age. She had not changed the fashion of arranging her hair since she was a bride, and retained on each side of her face, under her little cap, the two or three spiral ringlets of her youth. But the hair once black had become somewhat prematurely a lovely silver grey.

* Pronounced in the Highlands, Oonah.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
FRENCH HOME LIFE.

IN THE COUNTRY.

THERE really is a country in France. Not only a country of green fields and vines, of beet-root, olives, and tobacco, of poplars, oaks, and chestnuts, where corn is grown, and butter, wine, and oil are made, — not only a country of cows and sheep, of tillage and crops, but a country where people live and are at home, where they seek to satisfy their ambitions and their instincts, where they think, love, and try to be happy. Country life in France is composed, in part at least, of elements which are proper to itself. It presents aspects and it assumes forms which render it more or less dissimilar to the same life elsewhere; but it is none the less a national reality.

Taking the subject as a whole, it may be said that, though the gregariousness of the French inclines them to live in towns, their poverty or their functions oblige large numbers of them to live in the country. This way of stating the question has, of course, the defects of all general definitions; it leaves out the exception, and furthermore, it has no application to the richer classes, who can choose, and do as they like, but who, all the same, often reside by preference away from cities. Still it is tolerably correct as regards the mass of the population, and all the villages supply evidence of its general exactness, for all of them contain inhabitants who have been led to them by economy or by duty. In each of them is to be found a marked proportion of penurious old idlers, who sit on a bench in the sunlight throughout the day, and on a straw chair at their door or their fireside in the evening (if indeed there be an evening for people who go to bed at seven o'clock). There must be, in all France, at least five hundred thousand individuals who subsist in this way, waiting inertly for death, and doing utterly nothing meanwhile, except looking on at other people playing bowls. These obsolete citizens form a curious class, in which the exhausted energies of small government pensioners, of worn-out servants, and of various incapables from age, totter to their end. They linger torpidly on about £24 a year each; they adopt the villages because the towns are too expensive for their resources; they constitute the first grade of residents in the country.

The existence of so large a number of retired old people of the lower class supplies a striking example of the effects of

the resolute economy which the French practise with such self-denying, persistent vigor. Here are, we suppose, half a million men and women, two-thirds or three-quarters of whom are subsisting on the revenue of a treasure which they themselves have accumulated during forty or fifty years of work. Between them they spend, according to this estimate (which is certainly a low one), twelve millions sterling a year, representing, at five per cent., a capital of two hundred and forty millions. The true figure is probably a good deal larger; for, judging from the general concordance of the information which these veterans give about themselves, when questioned prudently, it is reasonable to imagine that their accumulations must exceed the general average of £480 a head, at which it is put here. The property which they represent is therefore so considerable as a total that its owners acquire from it a national importance which the outside view of them in no way suggests. Who would suppose that the ten or twenty decrepit ancients who crawl about the *place* in almost every one of the villages of France are living mainly on their own "economies"? Many of them, of course, are peasants who can no longer labor, and who are supported by their children. Some are in the receipt of pensions. But the majority are natives of the district, who left it in their youth to earn their bread elsewhere, and who come back to it at the end of life with £500. Not that everybody lays by £500 — most certainly not; if that were the rule, hoardings would rise so vast that, in about three generations, nobody could live in France, because the entire population would become too rich to work. And furthermore, it frequently happens that these fortunes are not the exclusive product of the personal labor of their possessors; they are often made up, in part, of little legacies from relations. Their owners necessarily leave them to some one else when their turn comes to die, and so facilitate for their successors the same sort of smouldering latter end through which they flicker out themselves. But still it may be taken as a general rule and a general truth that the majority of this group of country residents have put together with their own hands the cash which they possess.

In other countries such a class as this is rare. In France it is not only numerous, but it acquires, for the reason which has just been given, a serious economical importance. It is not personally amusing, for its members are, for the most part, very

deaf, with mixtures of blindness, asthma, and paralysis; but as a national species, and as an example of the fruits of laborious avarice, it merits observation and attention. It has no perceptible influence on country life as a whole, but it constitutes distinctly the lowest element of that life: for the peasants proper need not be taken into account at all; they work in the country, but they do not *live* in it in the sense which we are considering here.

Next above them comes a still more peculiarly French class, the army of small government *employés* who discharge their infinitely insignificant, but infinitely diversified functions, throughout the land, on salaries which stretch between £32 and the vast, envied, and rare immensity of £160. Of the six hundred thousand civil servants required by the complicated and inquisitorial administration of France, one-half at least are obliged by their occupations to inhabit the villages. The *gardes champêtres*, the forest-keepers, the various foremen of the national, departmental, and communal roads, the multiform agents of the tax-collectors, the overlookers of navigation on the rivers and canals, the inspectors, surveyors, and overseers of every possible process, thing, or deed that can anyhow be inspected, surveyed, or overseen, and crowds of other diminutive officials with a line of gold or silver braid on their *képis*, — are all, by the essentially local nature of their calling, dwellers in the country. How they manage to lodge, nourish, clothe, and educate their families on an average pay of about £60 a year, is a mystery worthy to be classed amongst the great enigmas of life; but they do it; and furthermore, they constitute a society. In certain villages, indeed, their group composes a recognized aristocracy; they are the great world of the place; they possess the advantages of rank; the Sunday bonnets of their wives and daughters arouse emotion amongst cap-wearing spectators. And all this is paid for by about twenty-five shillings a week! Very wonderful! But the people of this curious category are rendered more remarkable still by a peculiarity which is proper to themselves, which saturates and permeates them — by an unimaginable servility to their superiors, and by an equally unimaginable arrogance to everybody else. They cringe and they bully with a skill which is the most productive and the most evident of their professional endowments, and which sets the beholder wondering what hidden grace there can be in the service of the French government to develop so

wonderful a capacity of alternate obsequiousness and insolence in its lower retainers. It is all over France; it sprouts in every wearer of a goldlaced cap: but it is more striking in the country than in the towns, for the double reason that there is more space for it in the former than in the latter, and that people have more time to contemplate it.

Luckily it has little to do with home life; it ceases usually on the doorstep, and hangs itself up in the hall with the *képi* of office. These intensely hierarchical functionaries, these slaves of their chiefs, these despots of their subordinates, these domineers of the public, are generally very worthy people indoors; in most cases they are good fathers and good husbands. It pleases them to behave like Prince Bismarck, and to take off their greatness in the bosom of their family. It is only in the open air that they appear as plenipotentiaries of the State, and that they call upon the surrounding earth to adore in them the glory of power, and to tremble with awe before the majesty of government, which they impersonate. If they did not enjoy this royal prerogative, it is scarcely likely that they would consent to serve the nation for £5 a month. Vanity consoles them for poverty.

Of course a good many of them possess some trifling property. They have inherited £30 a year from their father; or they own a field or a house which brings them in a rent; or they have married a wife with a *dot* of a few thousand francs; or they have got a *bourse* at a college for their son: and in some of these fashions the twenty-five shillings a week are often carried to two pounds. Still, even at the best, their struggle must be hard, and their maintenance of the social position which they conceive to belong to them must be achieved by desperate efforts. And yet this does not render them interesting. Neither their poverty nor their worthiness succeeds in bestowing on them any attractions: they are too grand for pity, and too overbearing for sympathy; and, additionally, they are too fawning for respect. All this is regrettable, for they really possess qualities which, under other conditions, would place them, as a class, in a meritorious and estimable situation. It is true that their neighbours are habituated to their ways, and that they do not always gaze upon them with the mixture of amazement and amusement which fills the soul of less accustomed spectators; but that fact exercises only a local influence, and does not affect the national aspects of the question.

Regarded, generally, as an element of French life, the government *employé* clan asserts itself with a pretentiousness, a swagger, and an oppressiveness which provoke against it—even in the mildest cases—a good deal of ill-will. The result is that, notwithstanding their numbers, these subaltern functionaries pay the penalty of unpopularity; they are rarely on warm terms with the people round them, and usually group together in a narrow society of their own. But that society forms all the same a distinct component in country life; it stands on the second step upwards, and its relative isolation makes it all the more visible.

The third rank is occupied by the small proprietors who do not work with their own hands. This category is not a large one, but it takes us right into country life properly so called; for the people who form it really do *live* in the country, in the strict sense of the phrase. They have country occupations, country ambitions, and country jealousies; and they would probably have country amusements too, if any such things were known in France. They make their own butter, stand for the municipal council, are proud of their pears and roses, abuse the government if the price of hay falls, take in a halfpenny newspaper, dine without a table-cloth, stand about abundantly with their hands in their pockets, wear *sabots* when it rains, never open a book, and live generally with vagueness towards everything but money. That one exception, however—money—suffices by itself alone, to arouse in them all the intensities of which their natures are capable; they love it as if it were the child of their heart, seek for it as they would for water in a desert, and reverence it with an awe which they undergo for nothing else on earth or in heaven. But, like most of their countrymen, they cherish money rather for its own sake than for what it could enable them to acquire; they have a thousand-fold more delight in possessing it than in employing it—in reminding themselves that they own it, than in considering how they could utilize it. Throughout the whole of France the attitude of the middle and lower classes towards money is essentially miserly; but it is even more so in the country than in the towns, partly from the comparative absence of temptations to spend, partly from contact with the peasants, with whom avarice is a natural law, and cupidity the noblest of virtues. So these small landowners live pretty much like laborers, and

regard the piling up of savings as the first object and the first duty of existence.

They do not, as a rule, supply any elements for the composition of a country society. They are not accumulated in villages, but are, on the contrary, spread about in the fields and the woods, and on the roadsides. They are not, like government *employés*, thrown upon each other by the force of proximity; they have no *esprit de corps* to hold them together. Each of them lives for himself, his family, and his hoardings, and feels no interest in his fellows. Taken as a whole, they form an utterly uninteresting and socially useless class. They contribute, of course, like other people round them, to the accumulation of national wealth—they practise steadily the qualities of patience and self-denial, of persevering labor and obstinate economy, the general application of which has enabled France to recover so rapidly from the ruin of 1870; but in their hands these indisputable merits seem to become almost negative, and to lose a part of their public value. The reason evidently is, that this particular category of Frenchmen is most un-Frenchly dull; it is silent amongst a population of talkers; it is grave amidst a throng of laughers; it constitutes a band apart, with manners and customs of its own. And stranger than all it keeps up these peculiarities without communication between its members, without exchange of examples or of influences, as if they were a spontaneous and inevitable product of the situation of a country proprietor.

Yet, with all this, the class exercises a perceptible function in the rural districts, for it stands in between the peasants and the educated landowners, between the cottage and the château. It acts both as a buffer and as a cement. Its social mission is to supply a stage on which the laborer can rest as he rises; and furthermore to offer a retreat to the town tradesman who aspires to end his days under the shade of his own orchard. It is one of the stepping-stones in the march of social change which is spreading throughout France. Such interest as it presents is therefore political rather than personal, and leads us into an element of the country life of France which we will look at presently by itself. Meanwhile we can move up another step in the ladder and can begin to pay visits to the châteaux. We need not stop to examine the notaries and the doctors, who alone represent the professional classes in the matter; they are

excellent people — some of them at least — but they constitute no distinct order ; and notwithstanding the services they render, and the need which everybody has of them at some time or other, they are not numerous enough to count in the mass.

The châteaux, on the contrary, do count for a great deal. They ought, indeed, to count for nearly everything, for it is in them that we expect to find at least the true, essential country life of France — the realization of that well-practised, intelligent conception of rural existence which needs everywhere some share of both money and education for its fulfilment ; and which, consequently, lies beyond the handling of all those who possess neither. Of this life we do find in France some part, but not the whole ; and such of it as there is presents so many local characteristics, that comparison with other countries becomes difficult. The 'country life' of the upper classes is usually supposed to be composed everywhere of two main elements — of a copious existence in a big house, with active out-of-door occupations and abundant sport, and of a large share of action and influence in the direction of the political, administrative, and social working of the neighborhood. Such is especially the theory of country life in England. In France, however, regarding the nation as a whole, the second of these elements is almost invisible, while even the first of them is only incompletely perceptible. Let us begin by the examination of the first one.

Of course there are in France examples of great life in châteaux. There are, indeed, a few specimens of immensely grand houses, where things are done indoors with a splendor which equals, if it does not surpass, anything that can be seen in England. There may be five or six of them, perhaps, all lying within a range of two or three hours' travel from Paris. Anybody at all acquainted with the composition of French society can put their names upon them, for they are well known to fame. But what do these rare exceptions prove ? Simply that there are in France some gentlemen of fortune who, unlike the rest of their compatriots, have installed themselves superbly, who are not regarded as models, who are imitated by no one, and who can no more be instances as national types than diamonds can be called charcoal. The best of the ordinary châteaux of France, putting aside the historic places, are nothing more than villas ; the second class of them are little better than English farmhouses ; while

the third category, which is discoverable particularly in the southern departments, is made up of white-washed walls, which look as if they contained a prison. The word château is so elastic in its application that it may be said to include every sort of good-sized country house in which no trade is carried on. Just as every man in France, whatever be his rank or title, is "Monsieur," so is every decent private residence outside a town a "château." The effect of this wide-spreading employment of the designation is to bring into the château class of inhabitants every person who is not comprised in the other categories already named, and thereby to extend the field of observation so largely that almost all the shades of more or less educated society find places in it.

But yet, notwithstanding the variety of elements, there is a singular unity of ways of life amongst the people who compose this great group. It may be said of them, as a general description, that they all agree in doing nothing. There is amongst them an almost total want of the vigor, of the earnestness, which impress so particular an aspect on our own country life. Frenchmen shoot, — but how many of them are there who hunt, or fish, or boat, or drive, or even ride ? Who ever heard of outdoor games amongst them ? And as for the women, is one of them in fifteen thousand to be seen on a horse in the lanes ? These things do not attract the nation ; and when they are done at all, it is usually in the very smallest way. There are, of course, exceptions : there are in France a few packs of hounds — there may, perhaps, be ten of them in all ; but they are employed exclusively for private galloping, and are followed by none but the owner's friends. There are three Frenchmen who each sail a ten-ton yacht. There are men who ride, and like it ; there are ladies who ride with them ; but does the proportion of men and women who ever get into a saddle reach one-twentieth of the total number of the inhabitants of châteaux ? Certainly not. Their system of existence is passive. The men look after their "interests," and try not to make a mess in managing their estates (if they have any) ; they bestow close attention on the garden ; they read newspapers of their own political opinions, but never glance at a word from the other side ; they stroll about the home farm, and count the chickens ; they contemplate their laborers at work, and they regard country life as a serious process to be got through somehow, rather than as a condition which

opens to them special occupations, special thoughts, special exercises, and special directions of movement for their energy. It must be repeated that there are exceptions. There are, amongst the higher classes, some grand samples of men; fellows with will, and skill, and strength, and spirit, with all the qualities which make up manliness, and with true knowledge, and true love of the invigorating, inspiring pleasures which are obtainable nowhere but in fresh air. But the rule lies thoroughly the other way. The nation, taken as a whole, is as calm and gentle in its attitude towards outdoor life, as it is excited and intense in its conduct indoors. The contradiction between the two behaviors is complete.

Now, how is it that a race which possesses such rare capacity in the conception and the organization of its home life, which is so constantly seeking, at its firesides, for new emotions and new animations, should be so unable, nationally, to comprehend and utilize the thousand excitements which — to our eyes, at least — are so easily extractable from field sports and country occupations? The answer is not difficult to find. The reason is a double one: the French, as a mass, avoid all pleasures which cost money; and they shrink instinctively from diversions which they cannot share with women. So that, as hounds, yachts, coaches, salmon-streams, and game-preserves are expensive, and as there are not twenty women in France who could ride over a fence, handle an oar or a yoke-line, throw a fly, or walk with the guns — and as (perhaps happily for the tone of French ladies and of French society) there are not twenty fathers or husbands in the land who would let them do it if they could — the men abstain from diversions which involve large outlay, and in which they would find themselves alone. The two great influences of women and of the pocket, which dominate the national life of France, are seen and felt in this as in all else. So men and women compose their existences in the country as they do in the towns, and regard talk as the one essential to contentment.

This general description applies to the great mass of so-called châteaux — to nineteen-twentieths of them perhaps — to the houses which stand in a few acres of ground, with a garden and a poultry-yard, but to which no estate is attached. The exceptions are to be found in the places which really constitute a property, where the woods contain roe-deer and wild boar,

and where the men of the family have other notions in them than a disposition to sit in the drawing-room and make discreet love to somebody's wife. But even there, even in the best of cases, there is nothing but shooting to be seen; it is the one single sport of France. Such fishing as can be discovered is carried on with floats, with an occasional dragging of a pond for carp. A fly-rod is an object of which the nation is almost unaware. A riding-party is so rarely seen that the memory of it dwells in the talk of the neighborhood. Picnics are virtually unknown; neither cricket, nor football, nor lawn-tennis are things of France; croquet alone is discoverable. A remarkable result of all this is, that the French language contains but a single word to express the occupation of a man in the country: there is one thing for him to do, and one name to call it by; there is no variety for him either in his action or in its appellation. *Il chasse.* He rarely makes a heavy bag, but he always travels a good many miles over the stubble or through the fern. The exercise is good for him, so he takes walking for sport, and he is happy. *Il chasse.* And that is the sole daily work, from September to February, of about a fourth of the male inhabitants of the châteaux. The other three-fourths do nothing at all.

As happens, however, in a good many other cases, Frenchwomen come to the rescue of Frenchmen and save them from drowning in the sea of *ennui* on which it pleases them to navigate. What services those women render to their race and epoch! And nowhere are their services more solid or more brilliant than in the châteaux; nowhere is the superiority of the Gallic woman over the Gallic man more vividly and more convincingly established. In England the men make country life for themselves; they have no need whatever of the assistance of women in the matter; they would, indeed, in a good many country houses, forget that women exist at all, if the latter did not thrust themselves upon their attention with a vigor which supports no refusals. But in France the exact contrary is the case: there, as a national rule, it is the women who manufacture the country for the men, who provide them with the occupations which they are unable to create for themselves, but who naturally do it after their own fashion, indoors, not out of doors. Frenchwomen are, above all things, feminine; whatever be their faults, masculinity can never, by any possibility, be one of them. Their first ambition is to be, essentially and in every act, wom-

en. The roughening influences of the country have therefore no hold upon them; and even if, in infinitely rare cases, they take a share in sport, they do it awkwardly and timidly, get no encouragement from anybody, and are invariably blamed by all their friends. The result is that, though they think it natural that men should shoot and ride, and though they even laugh at them if they do not, yet they exercise no stimulating force in the matter, and turn, in reality, their sway precisely the other way, because they instinctively do their utmost to tempt the men to stop at home.

It is, however, certain that very few amongst them have any perception of the results which they are producing, and it would not be easy to make them feel that they are unconsciously but unceasingly contributing to the suppression of the main features of a country life. Just as Frenchwomen are habitually unaware of the enfeebling effects which they work in their boys by not directing them towards manliness, so also are they ignorant of the damage which they do to men by surrounding them in country houses with the habits and the diversions of Paris drawing-rooms. Still, though it would be too much to expect that they will ever ardently impel men towards regular outdoor work, they might not impossibly be induced to admit competition between it and indoor pleasures, if only they perceived that the men want it. But that is precisely what, in the majority of cases, they do not see. Putting aside the exceptions, the life which men lead in average French châteaux shows no sign whatever of any revolt against the system which the women organize for them and apply to them. They evidently like it — they are accustomed to it — it causes them no effort and no trouble; why, then, should they give the women to understand that they would prefer an alteration in it? So the thing goes on as it is. The ordinary château life is made to resemble, as closely as possible, life in Paris — and everybody is satisfied. There is sometimes downright dulness, and there is generally a sort of foolishness and misplacedness about it all; there is a want of fitness, of adaptation to surroundings; and above all, there is a lack of vigor, of that particular, well-marked, easily recognizable species of vigor which is the product of fresh air and exercise. And all this is as true of the people who spend the entire year in the country, as of those who come down from Paris; their method is the same, and so are the consequences. Throughout all France the situation is

substantially identical; the country counts for scarcely anything in country life.

And yet the people are as happy over it as if they were extracting its full essence from their situation, and were skilfully handling for their own benefit all the varied means of action which lie around them. They imagine, trustfully, that they really are living, not only in the country but of the country; and many of them talk about it with an earnestness which shows that they conscientiously believe in what they suppose that they are doing. It is this confidence which converts their incomplete life into a success for them. And after all, if they have all they want they merit envy rather than reproach; for they reach a state which we, with all our pastimes, do not frequently attain. The natural contentedness of the race comes to their help in this case as in so many others; their inborn philosophy inclines them to make the best of what they have and not to seek for more, especially if more costs money. And this is how it comes to pass that, as was said at the commencement, there really is a country life in France. Perhaps, however, it would be more exact, under all the circumstances, to describe it as life in the country.

It is a life on which the sun shines lazily, but gladsomely; a life without many objects or much change, but still a pleasant life, worth living. It does not afflict the men to do approximately nothing; on the contrary, they rather esteem themselves for being able to render nothing so diverting. Besides which, the women do really find a slight variation of occupation when they quit the towns and get amongst the fields. They visit the poor a little — as much as the democratic pride of the poor will allow; they work slowly (wonderfully slowly!) at altar-cloths and vestments for the church; they read the *Revue des Deux Mondes* or the *Contemporaine*, according to the direction of their convictions; they knit warm clothes for the village children; they mind the flowers; and they try to please the men — which, after all, is the most attractive function of women. So far, to some extent, at least, there is a connection between the habitual country avocations of Frenchwomen and of ordinary Englishwomen: but it is essential to avow that the sweet British emotion of teaching in schools is totally absent on the other side of the Channel, partly because that exciting process is not in harmony with French usages, partly because if it attempted to introduce itself, neither the *maire* nor the mis-

tress would permit it to live a day. It is, however, consoling to be able to suspect that if this entails, from certain English points of view, a privation for ladies, it probably involves a considerable advantage for the children; and furthermore, even without school-teaching, the country life of Frenchwomen is bright and affectionate, and is full of sympathies and talk. It is true that they do not have many guests, and few visitors except their immediate neighbors; but this does not affect their happiness,—they are quite content by themselves. As our English system of staying about with people is almost unknown in France, as it is limited to the largest and richest châteaux, and as, even in the very big places, it never attains the development and the continuity which it presents with us, it follows that the system of mutual assistance, on which we rely so much for getting satisfactorily through country-house life, has scarcely any existence amongst the French, and that each of their groups is dependent on its own social resources, and looks for small aid from the world at large. Yet, if there is but little action around them, there are plenty of talkers and plenty of laughter; and after all, those are conditions of life which make one forget sometimes that sport and sporting discourse are wanting.

And there is an especial merit of high value in the French conception of rural existence—it is cheap. The national economy of management is particularly evident in the country. The French power of extracting its full worth from money comes out there perhaps still more clearly than in the towns; for though people live fairly well in nearly all the châteaux, down to the smallest—though they are beginning, indeed, to manifest, in many places, a distinct tendency towards luxury and show—they do their housekeeping at strangely moderate expense. A reasonably comfortable country house can be kept going in France for much less than its equivalent would cost in England. And this is not in any way because food or clothes or rent are low-priced; on the contrary, they are, as a whole, decidedly dearer than with us: the explaining causes lie, not in local cheapness, but in the system of life and in the character of the race. And whatever may be our prejudices in favor of our own ways—whatever may be our conviction of the insufficiencies of a procedure which does not offer the particular characteristics which we, by habit, regard as indispensable out of doors—we surely cannot fail to recognize that, all the

same, there is value in an organization which is open to all pockets, which excludes nobody for venturing to be poor, and which is rarely tinted by what Balzac called “the chilling hue of money.”

And this is not its sole quality. It owns another, for it serves to prove a curious and unexpected fact; to indicate that there really are occasions and states under which the French, both men and women, can manage to get on almost without excitement. A condition of life which can enable them to do this, must really possess some remarkable attributes, and must exercise some peculiar influences. If one of the most evident of the general dispositions of the race can be temporarily modified—if its action can be partially suspended by contact with fresh air and with country habits—it would seem to follow that there must be more in those habits than is evident at first sight, and that they must merit a respect which the description that has been given of them here is scarcely likely to have provoked. This is really a most satisfactory impression to attain; for French country ways are so simple and so sympathetic, that it would have been uncomfortable to find one's self incompetent to esteem them. The discovery that they lift up the nation to a height at which it passes beyond the need of its ordinary emotions, permits us to indulge in deference for them. And there can be no doubt whatever that the discovery is real and not deceptive; for there are châteaux in which existence is not only uninspired, but entirely dull—not only passionless, but positively stupid. Stupid! A form of life which permits us to say of French society that it can occasionally become stupid, must indeed be respectable, and most eminently worthy of reverence and honor!

It must, however, be added that stupidity is not easily discoverable anywhere but in the country proper—amongst the woods and the vines. In the two other categories of out-of-town residence—on the seashore and at the mineral springs—it is usually rather difficult to lay hands upon it; for in lodging-places of those sorts diversions are supplied so abundantly that no space is left between them for torpidity. Neither Trouville nor Luchon, nor any of their kindred, can be said to conduct either men or women towards demureness, stolidity, or innocent propriety. It may, indeed, be asserted, without any risk of bearing false witness, that their habitual effect is to do just the contrary, and to vigorously promote perspicuity, smart talking, waltzing,

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love-making, enlarged views, *baccarat*, and other forms of developed intellect. Their action is, therefore, essentially quickening and elating; it throws people into groups with momentary identities of objects, with transient unities of enthusiasm; it engenders such a wonderful quantity of impetuous effervescence that silent persons are unable to support its proximity, and go forcedly away. And these "stations," as the French call them, act upon the body as well as on the intelligence: their operation is not purely psychical, it is physical as well; for at them many women and some men unequivocally swim or ride on ponies, according as the sea or the hills are before them.

It will, consequently, be at once perceived that we have reached here an altogether special phase of French country life; a phase in which the nation not only talks hard, but positively does something active out of doors. Several parties, each of them composed of about fourteen ladies and three gentlemen, may be seen every summer morning riding up from Luchon towards the Maladetta; just as numerous young persons in enterprising bathing-coats, and a few male swimmers, may be contemplated in the water at Dieppe in August. This evidence leads us to two results: the first, that, as has just been observed, the shore and the mountain provoke the French to exertions which they perform nowhere else; the second, that those exertions are infinitely more frequent amongst women than amongst men. Now this latter truth opens out sudden horizons and unforeseen contemplations. We all know that the women form the more valuable half of the French nation; but their superiority over the men, real as it is, in no way explains their greater occasional love of bathing and ponies, as we see it revealed in the Channel and the Pyrenees. What can be the cause of these local explosions of efforts of the body amongst ladies whose utmost struggles at other moments and in other places, would not carry them beyond a drive in the Bois or a walk of two hundred yards to church? Is it a brisk awaking to the merits of exercise? Is it a hasty recognition of a new pleasure? Is it a perception of a fresh form of domination over men? No: it can be for none of these reasons that French women arrive at relative exertion on the beaches and the hillsides; for if they supplied the explanation, we should necessarily see the exertion continued elsewhere afterwards—and the men would be tempted to take far more share in it

than they do. The true motive lies—so, at least, the women themselves pretend—in the eternal fitnesses of things; in the inevitable pertinence of certain acts to certain places; in the unavoidable impulse which forces the mind to direct the movements of the body in harmony with the aptitudes of the situation in which it is placed. So, according to this postulate, it is just as much in the inexorable destinies of Frenchwomen to jump into the salt waves directly they get near them, and to shake about for eleven hours a day on a stumbling hack as soon as they reach the mountain-sides of Auvergne or Gascony, as it is to sit at home in country houses and to go to the opera in Paris. The organization of life becomes, in this way, a simple question of local suitableness.

Perhaps these principles are sound; perhaps they will one day guide the universe instead of being limited to France; but, for the moment, it may be urged against them that they take no notice of the usually accepted notion that the country at large does not present any obstacles to the continuance in it of the habit of fresh air and movement which is momentarily acquired by almost all French ladies, under the special circumstances which have just been indicated. It scarcely seems to lie within the eternal fitnesses of things that because you ought to ride up a rocky path in Navarre you should therefore walk up it in Burgundy—or, better still, not go up it at all. But so it is apparently; and in the proposition thus set forth lies the entire theory of French country life, and the interpretation of all the riddles which it offers. It is satisfactory to reach a solution at last; but having found it, it is prudent to leave it instantly and to go on to something else, lest it should appear, on looking closer at it, to be so utterly insufficient that another one must of necessity be sought for in its stead.

So let us turn back to the second element which every one expects to discover in country life, no matter where,—to the action and influence of the châteaux residents on political, administrative, and social life around them. This part of the subject has been reserved for separate consideration. We can now revert to it.

It is, in the present condition of France, far more interesting than all the other details which we have been examining, for it raises the whole question of the position of the upper layers—of their status towards the rest of the nation—of their power, their credit, and their usefulness.

That so grave an issue should present itself in a mere sketchy outline of some of the lighter aspects of existence in French châteaux, may seem perhaps, at first sight, to be an extravagance; but how is it possible to scrutinize the one without arriving forcedly at the other? Unless we disassociate the two essential components whose union forms the aggregate of country life, and gives to it its meaning and its value; unless we eliminate all inquiry into public attitude, or public tone, or relationship between classes; unless we strictly limit our study to the purely material and personal aspects of the case; unless we resolutely do all this, we cannot anyhow avoid encounter with the political and social considerations which thrust themselves forward everywhere in the matter. But if we did so, we should throw aside more than half the subject, and should voluntarily leave out its most striking features. The higher strata of the country residents in France represent to us a principle and a force. Like their fellows amongst ourselves, their order symbolizes in our eyes the idea of property, of education, of vested interests, of responsibility, of duty; and, as a necessary consequence, we associate with them the additional idea of action, of gratuitous public functions, of accepted guidance, of welcome counsel and assistance to those around them. This is a view which is so natural to an Englishman, that he usually sees no reason for shaking it off when he pictures to himself the situation of French gentlemen under their own trees; and furthermore, it is indisputably the view which nearly every French land-owner would wish (if he could) to take of himself and his rôle. This being so, we may, without imprudence or exaggeration, look about us in France and see how far the real view corresponds to the conception of it which we have just shadowed out.

Alas! it must be confessed, at once, that such a prospect is rarely to be discovered on French soil. It is most certainly offered in some few special cases, but the rule is the other way. Instead of being the accepted pilot of his district, instead of acting as the recognized champion of local interests, instead of standing forward as the acknowledged leader and representative of his neighbors, the owner of the château is habitually regarded by the poorer people round him as their natural and obligatory enemy. There is rarely any unity of object or of interest between them, and there is almost always hostility of opinions, of sentiments, and of prejudices. The antagonism of classes comes

out in the country even more vividly than in the towns.

The causes of this estrangement are frankly avowed by both sides. The peasant hates the château because he has grown ambitious, and no longer sees any reason for admitting social superiorities now that he has become, in civil and political law, the equal of a duke; the gentleman looks with repulsion upon the peasant because he believes him to be a "Radical," and also because the peasant personally opposes him on nearly every question that arises between them. Each of them thrusts himself perpetually in the other's way; the first, by trying to keep the second down — the second, by intriguing against the influence of the first.

Now, whatever be our sympathies and our partialities as spectators of the conflict, it is not possible to seriously blame the peasant in all this. A struggle has been going on in France since 1789; it has been marked by ups and downs, by victories and defeats for both parties; but as a general result, the advantage has been largely with the people, and largely against the upper classes. The people have added to their education, to their money, to their power; they have done their best to rise in the world, and they have employed the surest and most productive means to that end. So far they merit no reproach. On the contrary, they deserve hearty admiration for having so thoroughly understood and so practically used the opportunities which the century is offering to them for bettering their situation, materially, intellectually, socially, and politically. But, unhappily, nothing of the kind can be said of the squires and patricians. It is on them that the responsibility of the position really lies; it is to their blind, bigoted dogmatism, to their utter want of true public spirit, to their inexcusable misconception of both their duties and their interests, and to their wilful neglect of the many weapons of defence which lay at their disposal, that the present almost total loss of their legitimate class influence is manifestly due. It is impossible for them to plead ignorance of their danger, for it is the main subject of their conversations between themselves; neither can they pretend that it is likely to die out by itself, for, since 1871, it has assumed fresh gravity by the proclamation of the ambitions of the *nouvelles couches sociales*. The intention to transfer both the origin and the exercise of power to the masses is loudly notified, and the masses are working intelligently and perseveringly to

attain their object. What have hitherto been known as "the governing classes" are distinctly requested to get out of the way; their coming dispossession from place and from authority is announced to them. Nothing can be more plain-spoken than the notice which is given to them. This being their situation, what are they doing to protect themselves? Are they uniting their action for the common preservation of the rights which are still regarded elsewhere as being inalienably attached to their birth and their position? Are they employing the arms of our time, which are the only ones fitted to actual forms of warfare? Are they using reason, patience, and argument? are they placing themselves at the head of a movement which they cannot resist? are they discussing concessions and inventing compromises? Not they. They are doing precisely the contrary. Instead of forming themselves into one solid army, they are broken up into bands of undisciplined skirmishers. Instead of copying the new systems of attack which their assailants have invented: instead of snatching from them and turning against them their arms of free debate, of free elections, of national will, of unrestricted liberty, and, above all, of "opportunism," — they continue to fire off (at the risk of their bursting) such antiquated blunderbusses as divine right, and the Napoleonic legend, and political prosecutions, and shoutings about "latent radicalism," and "social peril," and threatened *coup d'état*. Why, the arrows of Hastings might as well attempt to measure themselves against the artillery of Sedan. Instead of temperately discussing the new claims which have sprung up throughout the land, they sullenly and sulkily turn their backs upon them, and call everybody *ca-naille* who ventures to suggest that possibly there may be something in them. And instead of carefully inquiring into the motives which have led certain members of their own caste to take up the contrary attitude, and to join a movement which they are powerless to stop but by which they do not wish to be crushed, they shrink away from all such "renegades," and talk of them as "traitors."

If all this meant nothing else but opposition to the republic — if it signified no more than a desire to re-establish a monarchy — it would, of course, lie entirely outside the subject which we are considering. The form of the State, whatever it be, cannot be said to exercise much action on the march of home life; and it would be idle to make mention here of the fight

which is going on if its sense were merely dynastic. But the reality is deeper and graver. The establishment of the present government has evidently stimulated the ardor of the appetites which are shouting for satisfaction; but it would be a vast error to suppose that those appetites are, in themselves, republican. No: they lie outside the accidents of rule — they are independent of kings or emperors or presidents — they are uninfluenced by the shape of more or less temporary constitutions; but they do affect — most pressingly affect — the entire basis, the entire system, the entire organization, of country existence. This strife is a duel of classes — it is the "new ordeal" of our day. Its results — if victory falls to the assailants — will be to remove all the elements of power from the top of society, and to transfer them to the bottom. But still, in its actual aspects, it is social rather than political; it is, for the moment, a combat for self-respect rather than for prerogative — for opinion rather than for dictation — for a sentiment rather than for a right — for liberty rather than for authority. Yet, with all this moderation in its conduct, it is absolutely resolute in the pursuit of its object; and that object is — so far as country life is concerned — the abolition of the superiority of the château, and the reduction of its inhabitants to social impotence. To pretend that more than this is meant — to assert that the levelling of classes is to be accompanied by the seizure of property — is mere mad fear. Socialism has disappeared in France; respect of legal rights is universal there; the division of the soil amongst six millions of proprietors inclines each one of them to leave the holdings of the others undisturbed, in order not to provoke assaults upon his own; not even the wildest Radical would venture to invite the poor to rise against the rich. But even without any collateral outgrowth of that kind, the situation is serious enough as it stands; for the entire status of the upper classes towards the rest of the nation is at stake.

Of the many changes which have occurred in France during the last eighty years, there is not one which would be more innovating than the suppression of the upper classes as a recognized and valued national force; and such a suppression would make itself felt with especial keenness in the country because of the impossibility of avoiding frequent contacts between its inhabitants. France is, however, apparently marching towards it with a speed which is only explainable by the

abandonment of all endeavor to prevent it. There is not one château in a hundred in which any practical attempt is being made to win the neighbors back to confidence, to good-will, to esteem. The owner sulks; his wife sulks with him; their friends sulk round them; and they all unite in calling the peasants *canaille* because they no longer take off their hats when the carriage of the château passes. And yet, in the few cases of exception, in the rare instances in which common sense and the instinct of self preservation have led the gentlemen to adopt a different tone, the results attained have almost always been of a nature to indicate that the hatred of the peasant is not against the gentleman in the abstract, but against the particular opinions which are supposed to be proper to him, and which the peasant conceives to be inimical to himself. No one seriously professes in France, that a rich man, or an educated man, should be detested simply because he is rich or educated; the ground of the aversion which is now so general is to be found in the resentment of the poor man at what he conceives to be the use of wealth and knowledge to keep him down. This being the core of the difficulty — and that it really is so can be discovered in a quarter of an hour in any village in France — it would seem that it ought not to be difficult to get at it and dig it out. It certainly would be pulled into the daylight quickly enough if it existed in England; for luckily for us we have a habit of looking at difficulties in the face, and of dealing with them promptly according to their nature. But the case is different across the Channel. There the so-called Conservatives do not appeal to reason or to right; their one notion of defence is to talk loudly about the *canaille*, and about shooting every one who does not agree with them. This is strictly and positively the sort of language which is habitually heard in a great many of the drawing-rooms of France. The peasants know this, and it is not surprising that they object to it. The consequence of it all is, that the severance between the château and the cottage is growing less curable from year to year, and that little disposition to patch it over is left in the peasant's heart. He goes on accumulating rancor; he uses his tongue to teach his children that the château is a foe, and his vote to elect municipal and departmental councillors and deputies who will be disagreeable to the château. Putting aside the exceptions, this is a true picture of the situation.

Under such conditions rural life not only

loses one of its noblest and most fruitful uses — the strengthening of the tie between rich and poor — but it becomes, in many cases, a career of pain. Complaints that annoyances and humiliations are becoming more and more frequent are heard in every direction. Some excited people go indeed so far as to prophesy that, at the next revolution, half the châteaux will be set on fire, as an expression of opinion by the country round. It will therefore certainly be admitted now that this question of relations with the neighbors does really constitute an important element of the subject which we are considering here, and that if it had been left out, the story would have failed. A country life without hunting, without fishing, without riding, appears at first sight to be somewhat incomplete; but if the absence of these diversions is compensated by the probability of being hated and the possibility of being burnt, it will be acknowledged that there is still a little animation left in the situation, and that it may become almost as exciting to be a country gentleman in France as it used to be a few years ago in Tipperary.

This, however, is caricature. French villagers of our time are quiet, laborious, money-grubbing people, with nothing of assassins or incendiaries in them; and it is a pity that their would-be masters should aggravate difficulties, by suspecting them of dispositions which, most certainly, will never enter into their heads. What appears, however, to be true, to English eyes at least, is that the gentlemen still have a chance of saving the little that remains of their old standing, and of reconquering some fragments of influence, if only they could bring themselves to use the means which we employ. We cannot get it out of our heads that absence of sport means absence of vigor; that superiority of right and place over the masses is most easily and most assuredly maintained by a constant practice of the external forms of energy; and that popularity with the crowd is a result of a variety of causes, amongst which skill in bodily exercises still holds a not unimportant place. And the same idea has a certain limited application in France. The laborer there, like his fellows everywhere else, attaches value to mere strength; he admires those who possess it — he has a sort of instinctive scorn of puniness and weakness — and he is, instinctively, more inclined to recognize ascendancy, as he understands it, in a man of physical activity, than in one who sits at the fireside, reads "right-thinking" newspapers, and gnashes his teeth at the

wickedness of the epoch. If the women could only be got to comprehend this, there might yet be a faint prospect of saving something from the wreck. If they would drive the men out of doors instead of doing precisely the contrary; if they would urge them to try to take up a new attitude towards country life, and to show a liking for its special pleasures,—one step would be taken towards a reconciliation. The step could never be a long one, for it is not in ordinary French nature to really love field sports; and furthermore, the nation has no money for them, and the land is cut up into so many little holdings that no wide range is attainable anywhere but in forests. Still, such as it might be, it would do some little good, for it would introduce some unity of feeling, and would evidence to the peasants that the gentlemen find the country worth living in for its own sake.

The real solution, however, is not there. It lies, after all, not out of doors but indoors; not in the legs and arms, but in the heads and hearts of the upper classes. They may all learn to ride and shoot, and they may buy fly-rods, and feed prize pigs, but efforts of that kind will not suffice alone. They must change their very thoughts if they want to hold their own; and there is no more present sign that they will do so, as a class, than that they will all keep hounds or all sail about in yachts. It is precisely in their thoughts that the fatal obstacle lies; it is in their clinging to old prejudices, to their wilful blindness to the realities and the necessities of to-day, to the folly with which they are allowing an irresistible tide of advancing opinion to gain on them all round without attempting to reach a level of safety, to the persistence with which they go on "forgetting nothing and learning nothing," that their rapidly progressing effacement is due. Power in France will soon arise exclusively from below; it will cease to descend from above; it will no longer be a recognized attribute of social position or even of education: and the responsibility of the change will be charged by history, not to those who claimed it, but to those who did not prevent it; not to those who gained by it, but to those who lost by it; not to the conquerors, but to the conquered. The pity which spectators habitually accord to the vanquished will, in this case, be withheld. When the immense majority of the upper-class country residents of France have succeeded in getting themselves finally excluded from public life, from influence, and from exercise

of the prerogatives and the duties of their station; when the nation has contemptuously passed them by, and has learned to do without them,—Europe will tell them that they have reaped what they have sown; that they might have reared a very different crop if they had so pleased; and that, though the fact of their disappearance as a power in the nation is, for political and social reasons, deplored in other countries, no personal sympathy can be extended to them, because they have brought destruction on themselves.

But when all this has happened, when this vast change has been effected in the political situation, country life will still continue, all the same, to be pleasant. The châteaux will not be burned; the peasants will not become more rude—on the contrary, they may, not impossibly, show the generosity of great victors and treat their victims with particular respect; the cookery will remain excellent; the vine-shoots which light the autumn fires will blaze as brightly as now; rents will continue to come in exactly; the flowers will be as brilliant and the fruits as juicy as they have been this year; and the women's dresses will persevere in invention, their tongues in talk, and their lips in laughter.

After all, so far as the châteaux are concerned, nothing will be really changed; so it is useless to lament. The extinguished gentlemen of France will learn to do without position amongst their countrymen, just as they have ceased to need other privileges which have been successively taken from them. And the women, true to their mission, will console them.

From *The Spectator*.

WILL "PROGRESS" DIMINISH JOY?

I.

AFFIRMATIVE SIDE.

IT seems to me that one at least, perhaps the greatest, of the many drawbacks to our civilization, to that gradual increase in our knowledge of nature and our command over it which we call progress, is the decrease already perceptible, and soon to be more rapid, in our capacity of joy. The word "gladness," brightest of all expressions for the thought, has almost gone out of popular use in English; and after it will go slowly every cognate, though feebler form of the idea. It is true that with knowledge comes that physical ease which

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we call comfort, and relief from the terror of many kinds which haunted the older world, and perhaps some relief from pain—though we doubt this, expecting new and subtle forms of brain-disease—but there comes also a consciousness which in all its forms can produce only sadness. Man is becoming day by day more alive to all that is passing in the world, and therefore to the misery which, if not the largest constituent in human life, is the one that makes the deepest impression on human consciousness. The miseries of mankind, which are endless, are served up daily at every breakfast-table. No war arises, no epidemic breaks out, no flood devastates, no drought brings famine, no crime ruins a household, but we are called upon for sympathies which, as the brain grows more receptive of impressions from a distance, and more apprehensive from its appreciation of contingencies, become every day more keen. Space tends to vanish, and time is disappearing. We know of hunger in Shantung as accurately as in Cornwall; and while the people are still eating slate; the misfortunes which formerly reached us a year old are now occurrences of yesterday, and we feel for the cowering Christians in Batuk, or the shivering soldiers in Quetta, or the peasants in the Canaries dying of hunger from drought, as our forefathers were able to feel only for themselves and their immediate relatives. Thousands become actually ill as they read or hear of such calamities, and though the impact on the majority is not so deep, it is enough to impair most seriously the capacity of joy, which is farther diminished by the new intensity with which we realize the sufferings of those near enough to be part of ourselves. Knowledge has come, and with it sympathy, and our eyes are opened, as by an enchanted ointment, to all that passes in our midst,—to the dull monotony of endless toil, varied only by misfortune, in which the majority of our kind glide or stumble through uncheered and nearly hopeless lives. One-fifth of the population of England do not eat enough, and the four-fifths are learning to know it as if they were hungry too. The burden of the whole people rests on each, till a feeling begins to arise that pleasure is selfish, joyousness frivolous, gladness inhuman, if any of them are wilfully indulged, in an atmosphere so full of the cry of pain, and the reek of over-toil, and the steam of blood-guiltiness. The mere descriptions of household torture in any daily paper are enough to kill the serenity without which

joy must be momentary or artificial. No day passes without some new revelation of sorrow, which may be actual to one household only, yet brings either pain or sad reflection, or that indignation which is a burden, to all households that can read. Every new discovery in science, every improvement in machinery, or the diffusion of light, or the rapidity of intercommunication, does but intensify this process, which as it perfects itself develops in men the capacity of reception which we call sensitiveness. Habit makes them percipient of others' pain as physicians becomes percipient of latent disease. It is as if the skin of the mind were worn away by incessant friction, as if every man were mentally acquiring the powers of the divine Scandinavian watchman, Heimdaller, who looks abroad with such keen insight that he hears the trees grow, and sees the wool rise slowly on the backs of the sheep. Nor can we discern any limit to this sensitiveness. It is more than probable that as the faculty of sympathy arose in the modern world like a sixth sense, so it is developing itself until it will dominate the other senses, bringing with it that endless capacity of pain which, but for his wisdom and his foresight, knowing alike the truth and the ultimate meaning of things, must be the portion of God. Men who watch children much, say that among all mental impulses the hereditary capacity of anxiety is one of the most transmissible, and that we may yet see a generation in which apprehensiveness and sympathy will be the marked characteristics, both of which must be inevitably foes to joy. Knowledge always increases, and especially knowledge of the means to transmit knowledge, till it may well be that in half a century time and space will, in this world, have little meaning, till all that is done and suffered will be done and suffered under the mental eyes of all. And of all that occurs, pain will always be the visible feature, and the one which, while all men can feel pain, will evoke the greatest sympathy. We are not fully glad with the child's gladness, but we wince when the child shrieks or shivers with pain. The time may be, for many the time has arrived, when no cause of joy will still in London or San Francisco the pain arising from the certainty that the day before famine was raging in Tobolsk, and living skeletons falling dead of hunger in the Canaries, within the mental sight of the overfed in the great cities of the West. The impact of pain is so much greater than the impact of pleasure, that knowledge, as

it enlarges — and we stand obviously on the immediate edge of a cycle of enlargement — can bring to man only sadness.

And with the knowledge of suffering comes also a hopelessness of remedy. Whether religion revives, or momentarily dies out, it is certain that the most rapidly diffused of all new convictions of our day is the sense of the immutability of law. It affects those who protest against it almost as deeply as those to whom it comes with the force of a new and truer gospel. No one wholly escapes the sense that to dream of changing the deep current of human affairs is to dream of forcing water up-hill, that death, and disease, and war, the "pestilence, battle, murder, and sudden death," against which our forefathers compiled litanies of supplication will go on in their proportions, fixed or mutable, but still visible, while the human race endures. This certainty, revealed by the new knowledge, and accompanied by a perception of the vastness of all things in the world and in the universe, daunts, and will increasingly daunt, mankind, until the cry, old as the world, "*Cui bono?*" is perceptibly becoming more despondent — once it was uttered by the pocourante, now it is the wail of the philanthropist — and is more and more frequently answered by the despairing reply, "To none! There is no object in it all. Man is but an ant on an orange, and in appearing and disappearing matters as little. What matters progress when a gentleman lives but seventy years, and the world must cool in a few thousands? If we all heave at once, the world will still rotate, unregarding us." A form of pessimism is growing from knowledge which is not Schopenhauer's, but is rather a form of sullen submissiveness to unknown powers, of cowering resignation under the pitiless but unavoidable hail, before which the very spring of joyousness, which is hope, tends to fade away. There is no gladness consistent with such knowledge of pain and such conviction of its remedilessness, such certainty that live as we may, and exert ourselves as we can, pain and death, and separation, and the consciousness of infinite insignificance in the universe, will all come in their turn, and are all incurable. Happiness, the happiness of self-victory, of stoicism, of resignation may be attained; but of joy, elation, joyousness, gladness, there is a final end. Joy is not possible to those who realize the world, yet do not feel hope for it, and it is towards that mental condition that all progress tends. We

might as well expect joy in the farmer who, knowing that he must always farm, knows also that the law of the universe will always keep competitors also farming, and therefore keep crops too cheap for him ever to be free from anxiety for his piece of bread. He is the better, may be, for seeing daily how the great crops come on in Illinois, and Odessa, and the Dooabs of upper India, but that new knowledge brings a new certainty of coming defeat, and must extinguish joy.

And with the new knowledge is coming also for the millions of men a new discontent, a clear recognition, for so many ages mercifully concealed from their eyes, of the deep gulf which divides the lot of the poor from the lot of the rich, the day of the toiler from the day of the enoyer, the fate of him who has from the fate of him who has not. With the perception of what is gained by leisure, by easily obtained food, by security from want, by the appliances of civilization, comes the fierce crave to possess them also, which is not envy, though it looks so like it, and which is at this moment, under its foolish name of "Communism," the most loudly and fiercely expressed of all the desires of man. It is a desire which produces exertion, and is not, therefore, all bad, is probably no more bad or good than any other motive force; but it kills gladness among the millions, not only because it is unappeasable, but because they know it to be so. The mass of mankind must toil forever, if only that they may eat, and as toil becomes distasteful, as it is sure to do as intellectual interests increase, and knowledge becomes desired, and the true benefits of wealth becomes more and more clearly perceived, this fact alone must kill joyousness in the masses, just as fatigue now kills it in the individual. It is so impossible, and would be so grateful, for the mass of mankind to rise to the point where intelligent content begins, that the sense of this truth alone must weigh on man like lead.

And all these enemies to joyousness are strengthened by the form which unbelief has assumed. I do not believe in the death of religion, and will not assume it, therefore, even for an argument; but I do believe that unbelief has only begun to spread, that it has not quite reached the European masses, and that as knowledge advances it is sure to reach them. They will become conscious, possibly all at once, of the thing they know not yet, the immense intellectual force of the great doubt,

of the extent of uncertainty in which the most pious minds are for the hour compelled to live. That uncertainty will spread to them, and in that uncertainty will be an abiding anxiety, amid which joyousness cannot live. It is so now. If there is one marked fact about the unbelieving masses of the Continent, it is that they are unhappy to pain, that the joyous unconsciousness of all but the present which should be the note of convinced secularism is entirely absent; that those in Germany, France, and Spain who profess atheism so loudly, and probably are atheists, are calling with equal loudness for a new earth, are declaring the social system unendurable, are risking life and liberty, in half-frenzied efforts to give society some incurable wound. Of all men the atheistic socialists cry aloud most as if in pain, are least at rest, are least inclined or able to manifest joyousness. They call themselves slaves, and they are not hypocrites. They say the world crushes them, and they feel crushed. They declare any overturn preferable to that which exists, and actually risk it. They show no trace of old pagan feeling or of the old defiant atheism, the atheism which sprang from fulness of life, and seemed in that form such a danger to the old priests; still less of the sulkily submissive atheism of the far East, the unbelief under which millions upon millions of Chinese, perhaps a tenth of all mankind, stoically endure all that happens, intent only, in the confusion of all things, to secure some silver for themselves. The uneducated atheists of today are miserable, discontented to acute pain, fierce to the fighting-point, with the very capacity of gladness fairly gone out of them. One no more expects laughter from them than from monks of La Trappe, or from a forlorn hope marching over a mine to apply a barrel of powder to a fortress-gate. I am not saying this, as an argument against atheism, or denying that an unbeliever may be joyous, or ignorant that many hereditary atheists, Jew atheists especially, have a capacity of enjoyment amounting sometimes to joyousness. I only state as one of the great melancholy facts of our era, that the unbelief which is filtering down so deep bears with it no relief from the burden of the world, rather tinges the new consciousness of man, the result of his new knowledge, with a fiercer discontent, a fighting antipathy to all that exists, a morose distaste for a gladness and joy that it does not profess to share. The new unbeliever rejects heaven, and hates or despises earth.

II.

THE NEGATIVE SIDE.

THE weak point in this argument seems to me to be the assumption that there is something in the necessary effect of what is known as "progress," to increase the drain on the inward elasticity and vitality of human nature. Now, that appears, on the whole, improbable, if not untrue, though undoubtedly, for particular phases of progress, it is true. It is clearly true that what we may call childishly happy races lose a great deal of the fountains of their joyousness, in losing their ignorance and their indifference to the future. I do not doubt for a moment that the Irish peasantry of the time before the famine were a far more joyous race than the Irish peasantry of the present day; nor that the negroes of our West Indian colonies, as they grow in culture and the power of looking forwards, lose a great deal of their gaiety of heart. Unquestionably, too, as the pressure of individual responsibilities on the character increases, — whether through the adoption of Protestantism, in place of Roman or Greek Catholicism, or through the growth of political anxieties and the habits of self-government, — that superabundance of the vitality needed to meet human cares which exhales in joyousness, tends to diminish. To admit as much as this is only admitting, in relation to nations, precisely what every one concedes in relation to individuals when it is said that the period of youth, before the weight of personal responsibilities becomes very heavy, and after the yoke of parental authority has ceased to be so, is the most joyous period of life. Unquestionably it is so, for the very good reason that it is the period of life when there is more vitality, and less external drain upon it — a greater excess of inward springiness over outward anxieties — than ever before, or ever after. Some exceptionally happy children are perhaps even more joyous as children than in youth, but then they are the children who are not much "disciplined" in their childhood, and who therefore do not enjoy, later in their youth, the sense of power which that discipline is apt to give. As a rule, I fancy those children whose childhood is most joyous will not find their youth equally so, for they will miss the exquisite stimulus not merely of the final release from authority, but of the new consciousness of strength which the pressure of that authority has secured for them. And something of the same kind may be true of nations. As the man who

has to get in youth the discipline which he missed in childhood, will seldom find his youth so joyous as the man who inherited from his childhood the power which discipline gives, at the same time that he exults in the creative life of youth,—so the peoples which are too light-hearted and without thought for the morrow in one part of their career, are apt to become gloomier as they become more prudent; whilst those who have passed through a corrective discipline of responsibility in the earlier stages of their growth, will often blossom, as Athens did in the age of Pericles, and as England did in the Elizabethan period, into a sort of joyousness which is not the joyousness of mere light hearts, but includes the joyousness also of creative power. I say this to guard myself against being understood to mean that there is no kind of progress which does not, and does not necessarily, drain away the sources of that exuberant vitality to which joyousness is due. But the general thesis advanced is not that there are some changes of the progressive kind in the life of peoples, as in the life of individuals, which tend to exhaust joy,—but that *all* progress tends to be of this nature, that in the growth of science, and popular knowledge and sympathy,—the three chief constituents of progress,—a cause is at work which of itself tends and necessarily tends, to overtask men, and to drain off that surplus life, that redundant buoyancy of nature without which the joyous temperament is hardly possible.

Now this appears to me untrue. I cannot see any tendency inherent in the growth of science, of popular knowledge, and of sympathy, to overburden all men, no matter in what phase or stage of character it finds them. You cannot say absolutely of any one man, or of any one race, that the letting of new cares and responsibilities into his life will diminish joyousness. Joyousness seems to me to depend chiefly on the relative proportion between life or power, and that burden which stimulates and elicits life and power. Where the burden is sufficient to elicit the whole power of an individual or a race, but not to task it to the full, to leave a certain margin always ready to bubble over,—there, to my mind, the conditions of joyousness chiefly exist. But it is quite as easy to destroy the conditions of joyousness by a deficiency in the stimulus, as by an excess. The greatly overworked man can never be joyous. The slightly under-worked man, if he is worked in that vein which best elicits his own consciousness of

power, is the most likely of all to be so. But the greatly underworked man, the so-called man of leisure, is hardly ever joyous. And so with nations, the over-tasked nation—"the weary Titan, staggering on to his goal"—is never joyous; the greatly undertasked nation seldom; the nation which is just coming to the consciousness of its power, but feels that it has enough and to spare for all the probable drafts upon it, is in the condition most favorable to joyousness of any I can conceive.

Now let me apply this principle to the effect of growing science, growing knowledge, growing sympathy, on the life of man. Undoubtedly, it is true that the rapid dissemination of knowledge peculiar to our age, has a much greater tendency to tell us gloomy news than cheerful news. Prosperity is not a sensational fact; it seems so appropriate, that it does not attract attention; you telegraph crime or a suicide, when you would not think of telegraphing a benefaction, or an accession of fortune. But I doubt extremely whether the gloom thus diffused over the world diminishes at all seriously the total amount of human joyousness. The fact is, that human sympathy, even at its highest point, is a limited quantity in human nature, and often quite as great in the man whose knowledge of misfortune only extends over a couple of alleys, as in him whose knowledge extends over two hemispheres. The general effect, I fancy, of increasing the range of our sympathy with the race in general, is to drain off a certain portion of its intensity for individuals. It has often been noticed that sympathies which are very wide, are not so eager in relation to individuals, as the sympathies which are somewhat narrow in range. I cannot help thinking that as the range widens, we probably feel more equably with all, but less ardently with a few. At all events, I doubt if the knowledge of distant and half-realized suffering, however terrible, sensibly diminishes that individual overflow of life and power in a creature so limited as man, to which joyousness of nature is due. So far, indeed, as the attempt to relieve such calamities overpowers the energies of men already tasked up to their full strength, it would, of course, have this effect. But short of this, I generally doubt it. You cannot sympathize enough with unknown sufferers, to restrain the welling-up of a buoyant, inward strength. As a child is quite unable to suppress its gaiety for anything less than a grief which touches its home, so men are unable to suppress the overflow of their strength and

youth, for anything less than a calamity which touches somewhat closely their own race. And we must remember that there is another side to the account. Every growth in the power of sympathy is probably a much greater addition to the fountains of joy than to the fountains of sorrow,—not, indeed, because you enter into the joys of others half as clearly as you enter into their sorrows, but because the power of sympathy is in itself so great a source of imaginative life, so great a help to the insight which elevates anguish into tragedy, and suffering into sacrifice; because it enables us more than anything else to obtain partial glimpses into the ends of sorrow, and of the light behind the cloud of pain; because it aids us to feel that we are not merely men, but also sharers in the life of man. In the highest sense of the word "gladness," I believe the growth of sympathy has swelled the springs of gladness, much more than it has swelled the springs of sorrow, by the extension it has given to the vividness and range of the human mind, the exaltation, not to say rapture, it has lent to the mood of meditative faith, and the sublimity which it has added even to many aspects of human suffering. Strangely enough, even those who, like Shelley, disbelieve in God, have been raised by the higher flights of human sympathy so as to reach some inscrutable confidence in the ultimate victory of Promethean fortitude over unjust power; and we see something of the same unreasonable, but indestructible, faith, in the exaltation with which modern Positivists speak of the future of humanity. All this meditative prophecy seems to me to be reasonable only so far as it is evidence of a real communion between men and God such as forces these beliefs even on those who have no logical ground for them. But whether it be so or not, it is at least clear that the extension of a vivid sympathy with all human feelings and hopes has, as a matter of fact, added, whether reasonably or unreasonably, at least not less, — I believe much more, — to the spring and elasticity of human hope, than it has added to the detailed suffering due to our enlarged knowledge of human misery.

And now as to the fresh drain upon human joyousness caused by the increasing vivacity with which we recognize the immutability of law, and by the paralysis with which our new knowledge of human insignificance is sometimes apt to strike us. I do not mean to say that it adds to our gladness to conceive of ourselves as mere ants upon an orange in a universe of

innumerable suns, or that the progress, if it be progress, which has assured us that regress must begin before many centuries are over in other words, which has brought so many of our astronomers to regard the cooling-down of the earth into a lifeless cinder as sooner or later a physical certainty, is a kind of progress which makes the heart lighter. But I do extremely doubt whether this sort of belief has any appreciable effect in depressing that sense of overflowing energy and life, on which the joyousness of men depends. If the heart bounds high, even though its owner may be abstractedly convinced that he is a mere ant on an orange, that will be no reason why it should cease to bound high. It may seem strange that there should be so much intensity of life in the infinitesimal, but after all, is not an ant on an orange, if it have keen thoughts, and warm hopes, and a sense of communion with the eternal, much more, after all, than a frozen planet, or a mighty globe of fire not yet alive? You cannot browbeat a mind to any good purpose by parading the vastness of the world of matter. Even admit that a physical term is fixed, by the fiat of immutable law, to all the teeming thoughts of hope and love which are embodied in this little world, and the only reply which a buoyant heart will make is, that so much the more certain will be the infinite extension of the spiritual part of that thought and hope and love, in a world which is not perishable. So long as there is no sign of a growing disproportion between the burden of man and the heart with which he bears it, so long I can see no tendency in what is called "progress" to extinguish joy. If there were any proof of a regularly dwindling vital power in man himself, or, without a dwindling vital power in man, a regularly increasing weight in the burden he has to bear, I should be dismayed. But I can see no proof of either. To a great extent it is admitted that the growth of knowledge and sympathy, implies a diminution of the burden to be borne. I maintain also that in the growth of both we have a positive source of growing power, directly increasing the spring and elation of the heart, and sometimes tending almost to an undue intoxication of human nature, — witness the nonsense often talked, and not seldom seriously accepted and wrought into the genius of more than one national character, as to the triumphs of the nineteenth century. Silly as most of this is, it rests upon something which is not silly, — genuine evidence of the marvellous elasticity of our mental and moral

resources,—which means, to my mind, genuine evidence of a perennial divine fountain from which they are supplied. But apart from any interpretation of mine, the evidence seems to me clear that the spirit of the race rises, instead of falls, as the centuries go on. We cope with pestilence and famine now, as no previous age would have dreamt of trying to cope with them. With our new knowledge of law, we feel as if we might almost learn, in a few centuries, to store up heat and light against the cooling of the sun. But after all, it is not conviction of any kind which feeds the fountains of joy; it is the instinctive sense of life, of youth, of surplus power. And the growing knowledge and the growing sympathy keep, as it seems to me, that instinctive sense of surplus power rather on the increase than on the decline.

Then there is the growth of scepticism, and I do not deny at all that the growth of scepticism does tend more effectually to throw a damper on the human spirit, to quench its vividness, to overshadow its joyousness, than any other influence really at work and probably destined for a time to grow, in this world. But then I suppose the growth of scepticism,—so far as it is due to "progress,"—so far as it is due to the new light and knowledge,—not, of course, so far as it is due to the old darkness of selfishness and sin,—to be only a temporary phase of error, and in that degree in which it is a phase of progress at all, only a phase essential to the ultimate and more steady decline of scepticism. Even now the higher sceptics are compelled, by their own minds, to give their materialism an idealistic turn which is almost fatal to it as materialism. Even now "the secret of Jesus," to use Mr. Arnold's own phrase, is claimed by one of the agnostics as the deepest principle in the law of the universe. Mind and conscience,—thought and self-sacrifice,—infinite purpose and divine humility,—are recognized more and more every century as at the heart of material things; and the more this recognition grows, the more, in my belief, will the spring of joyousness grow with it, for the greater will be the inward resources of man, and the less in proportion the burden he has to bear.

good-naturedly enough—while they admire their *naïveté* and freshness, and, in some sense, even their *brusquerie*. But laugh we must. Who could help it? Despite railways, newspapers, and the various methods of rapid and easy transmission of metropolitan ideas to the country, it is surprising how primitive thoroughbred country people still remain. Take the ordinary specimen of the provincial lady, the wife or daughter of clergyman, solicitor, or surgeon in a village or small town (and the latter definition will include places which the provincials consider large towns), and transport her to London, and she is as completely at sea as a Whitechapel counter-jumper in a river boat. She has read about London often enough, and probably has her "best clothes" from a mercer's in the West End; and her sons or brothers, as the case may be, tramp about the country-side in "wear-resisting" fabrics from a city tailor's; but the London of her imagination only gives her a vague idea of the bewilderment awaiting her in the London of reality. From the moment that she sets her foot on the platform of the busy terminus, where she sees more people than were ever at one time present to her sight before, she enters upon the state of mind enjoyed by the renowned Tilly Slowboys—that of perpetual astonishment—and how she shows it! The country cousins with whom she has come to stay are less surprised than amused. The "Cockney impudence" anathematized by Mr. Ruskin, always expects something funny and outlandish in a provincial. Consequently, a bonnet of six months' date, a dress ditto, and a mantle such as "nobody wears," cause the metropolitan relatives to titter in secret, but are only what they expected. The lady from Wales or Yorkshire is, however, fully persuaded that she is attired in the last mode, and is as happy as the day is long. How she does enjoy herself! how frankly, how heartily! How she stares at the shop-windows, wonders at the number of police (we think there are too few!) and gapes at the omnibuses! She is rosy and cherubic, like a fat baby when it is not crying; and her heart embraces every form of suffering, real or simulated. You would have a queue of beggars half a mile long at your heels if you let her give to all the whining impostors who beg of her, seeing the "country lady" at a glance. She will not believe you when you tell her they are all impostors. She has rare faith in human nature, and says London life makes people cynics. Perhaps it does; but country life

From The Touchstone.

THE COUNTRY LADY IN TOWN.

THEY are a source of great amusement to London relatives, who laugh at them —

narrow their minds to a nutshell. If she goes out alone, she comes back with a story of adventure rivalling Burnaby's "Ride to Khiva." What things she has done! What things she has left undone, that she might have done! She has tramped miles in her terrible boots. ("I vow and protest," as Dick Avenel said, "they've got nails in them.") She went from South Kensington, where she is staying, down to Newington to see Spurgeon's Tabernacle; from there she walked to London Bridge, and found out the Monument; then she reached the Bank, and, after standing there for an hour, timidly asked a policeman when the traffic would cease. The policeman grinned grimly, and took her over the maelstrom. Wasn't he kind? London police are the admiration of the country visitor. She wandered into Cheapside, lost her way (how, you can't make out, but country cousins positively possess a genius for losing their way); was nearly bumped to pieces by the crowd; drifted somehow into Holborn; turned eastwards, and asked if she was going right for South Kensington; contemplated with rapt delight the superb view from the Viaduct; felt hungry, but could not summon courage to enter a confectioner's, because she saw a few young men in the shop; wanted to take an omnibus, but did not know how to stop one; finally got the wrong one, and, being carried to the Edgware Road, inquired if she had reached South Kensington; thought the Edgware Road was Regent Street, and Regent Street the direct route to South Kensington; at last got a cab—a four-wheeler, as hansoms, she imagined, were "fast"—and reached her destination tired out, and fully persuaded that she had passed through as many perils as Othello. To do her credit, the country lady is venturesome enough by daylight. It is after dark that she is afraid to move from the shelter of home. Then she believes the wild beasts seek their prey. Is it "proper" to go to a theatre without a

gentleman? Dare two ladies walk up Regent Street, are they not spoken to every minute? If by chance some one does speak to her, she gathers up her skirts in both hands, and bolts, under the full impression that the whole neighborhood is chasing her. It is a serious charge to have a country lady "in tow" in London streets, especially at night. At the crossings she either rushes into the road as if she were at home, where two carts per day traverse the village "streets," or stands trembling on the kerb, and almost compels you to drag her over the fearful whirlpool of vehicles. But for sight-seeing she is only rivalled by the Cookist on the Continent. She thinks nothing of Madame Tussaud's, the South Kensington Museum, the Tower, St. Paul's, and a theatre for a day's work, and wakes up the next morning ready for another half-dozen places at all the four points of the compass. In music she usually prefers the Christy's and in the drama she is omnivorous; never having seen a play, all acting is alike to her, and all splendid. In short, she is a happy, hearty creature, dreadfully unstylish, amazingly innocent, knowing nothing that "everybody knows," but wise in many things that to "Cockney impudence" seem hardly worth knowing. But she makes delicious conserves and preserves (we have not the least idea whether there is any difference between these two), and sends us up baskets of autumn apples. So the country cousin is useful, and certainly "most awfully amusing." Slang horrifies her, by the way; and, on the whole, though she has an accent, her English is, perhaps, purer than that of her town relations. She thinks them not a little fast, but very "nice"—she would not say "firstrate" on any account—and very ignorant not to know how jam is made, and never to have heard of the rural dean of Slowcombe. Perhaps she is right! Who shall decide what is "worth knowing"?

INDIAN PUNKAHS.—A very efficient mode of working punkahs has recently been patented, and for simplicity and cheapness will probably supersede all other methods of keeping these useful contrivances in continual motion. By means of an electric motor, punkahs can be worked at the cost of a few pence daily, and being very moderate in price, it is probable that it will ere long be largely employed in military establishments and private residences throughout our Indian Empire. The motor,

with the punkah in operation, can be seen daily at the offices of the Howe Machine Company, Limited, 48 Queen Victoria Street, City, and may fairly be regarded a very meritorious and useful contrivance. We believe that the motor can be employed to innumerable purposes, such as the working of sewing-machines, organs, harmoniums, etc.; and, when its merits are more widely known, will doubtless be in great demand.

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